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ABSTRACT

Designed primarily for English faculty at two-year colleges in California, "Inside English" includes articles on instructional innovations in teaching remedial writing, literature courses, and freshman composition, and on major curricular, administrative, and employment issues in the field. The four issues in volume 8 include the following feature articles: (1) "Where Research and Practice Meet: The Theoretical Foundations of an English Program," by Ruth Maddox; (2) "Fair Is Fair: Course Rotation at Mt. SAC (San Antonio College)," by Jim Moore; (3) "Teaching English As a Strange Language," by Roselle M. Lewis; (4) "Bilingual Bridge: Faculty-Curriculum-Lab," by Nancy H. Nadeau; (5) "Teachers, Students, and Writer's Intuition," by Kevin Ryan; (6) "Controlled Composition: An Alternative to Grammar in the Writing Laboratory," by Helen Heightsman Gordon; (7) "Unlearning Comp: Paragraphs," by Richard Tracey; (8) "Making Better Beginnings: Generating Effective Writing Assignments...Across the Curriculum," by Andrew Moss and Carol Holder; (9) "Writing to Learn Writing," by Judith Hert; (10) "Keeping Alive by Reading and Writing: Book Reviewers as Role Models," by Jim Moore; (11) "What I Did When... Resistance Seemed the Name of the Game," by Georgia Logan; (12) "A Unique Writing Program: Role Models Help Build a Bridge to Success," by Patricia McGrath; (13) "A Plea for More Literature and Humanities in the Community College Curriculum," by Jack Gill; and (14) "A Meditation on the Nature of Composition," by Doug Lane. (AYC)

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EDITED BY BARBARA BILSON

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inside english

Vol. VIII, No. 1 | Journal of the English Council of California Two-Year Colleges | September 1981

INSIDE *inside english*

ECCTYC Looks at What We Do

How do departments fairly divide up the "courses" pie? Mt. SAC's English department worked out a course rotation plan.
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The English faculty at Imperial Valley College has built a "bilingual bridge" to help the students achieve English mastery.
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WHERE RESEARCH AND PRACTICE MEET

The Theoretical Foundations Of an English Program

By RUTH MADDOX
Cerro Coso Community College

As the decade of the eighties begins, English instructors in California face many pressures. These pressures emanate, on the one hand, from the community and the California State University system demanding improved writing skills from community college students and, on another, from college administrators demanding improved retention rates. But more important than these outside pressures are the pressures that English instructors themselves face to find improved methods of teaching to use with the diversity of students currently enrolling in community colleges. As instructors turn to recent research in their own field of English as well as related fields, they can find some welcome assistance, and the gap between research and pratice will be narrowed.

This article will present the theoretical basis for the pratices that have evolved over a ten-year period in the English program of a small, isolated community college. These practices, which a colleague and I developed, are shared in the hope that they will prove as valuable to others as they have to us in examining the foundations of our programn in an era of accountability. An overview of the entire program will first be presented with an explanation of how the parts make up an integrated whole. Methods of instruction within specific parts of the program and their implications for student learning will then be discussed.

THE PROGRAM

As is true at all community college with an open door policy, our students enter with diverse backgrounds, diverse abilities, and diverse goals. Both variety and repetition must, therefore, be built into the program because some students persevere and advance through several courses while others drop out after completing just one course. Several of Jerome Bruner's ideas about learning have been incorporated into the English program. Bruner, a noted Harvard psycologist, suggests that there be a continuity and development in what he labels a spiral curriculum with each course building upon the concepts of the previous one.[1] The English program follows this spiral curriculum principle with a four-level sequence of courses. Students are placed in courses on the basis of a placement essay written in English classes and their scores on the Iowa Test of Educational Developement.

Bruner also believes that written language promotes cognitive growth because language is essential for a person to explore and understand his environment, beginning with the most immediate environment on which he can act and progressively explanding it into the sphere of ideas. He indicates that knowledge can be expressed in three ways: by actions, by images, and by symbols. He labels these the enactive, the ikonic, and the symbolic levels of developement.[2] These levels are successively more difficult, and a person must perform successfully on one level before advancing to the next, much like Piaget's stages of developement in children. To translate Bruner's ideas into practice, English instructors must create writing assignments that follow a spiral commencing with how-to-do papers and simple narratives (the enactive level), before assigning descriptive papers (the ikonic level), and then advancing to

papers written about ideas (the symbolic level).

The writing component of the spiral curriculum begins with assignments that emphasize simple writing on personal topics and ends with the assignment of the research paper. Students on the lowest level, who frequently have had a little expierience writing, are first given controlled writing assignments to build their self-confidence. They are furnished short passages of good writing to imitate in order to help them use more spontaneously some of the basic conventions of the langunge. Besides these controlled writing exercises, students also describe their own experiences in short personal narratives. In the next course, students are encouraged to develop a writing fluency by expressing their emotions, thoughts, and experiences in journals. Although errors are pointed out in their writing, students are rewarded for the quantity of writing produced, and the standard for grades on these journals is determined by the number of pages completed. Other writing assignments at this level include short dialogues, anecdotes, and a process paper. These assignments correspond to the enactive and the ikonic stages of Bruner's hierarchy.

After that, students move up the spiral to work on the structuring of their writing into paragraphs. They are taught to add a clear sense of purpose and a sense of order to details that describe their experiences. Bruner's ideas about structure are applied here also. He contends that it is essential to teach structure as a foundation for the transference of the knowledge to other experiences. The types of assignment here are mostly the ikonic types with just an introduction to writing papers on the symbolic level. The highest level course builds on the structure introduced in the previous one and adds to it the practice of writing essays following various methods of development and writing a research paper based on the writing of others. It is unrealistic to expect students to advance from the writing of simple personal narratives to conventional academic essays in a short time. Perhaps the four semester sequence of our program is still inadequate to provide students with sufficient time and experience to develop Bruner's progressive cognitive skills. However, further research and our own experience will furnish the basis for making additional changes in this writing sequence.

Spelling, sentence structure, and vocabulary components are integrated into each course and are also based on the spiral curriculum of Bruner. Although we feel that all these components are necessary on each level, there should also be variety in the method of teaching as well as the conceptual level of the material so that students will not feel that they are just repeating the same work but are building on previous learning experiences. In the sentence structure component, students in the lowest level course practice simple sentences, employing the conventional forms that many of us take for granted, such as capitalizing the first word in each sentence and using correct forms of nouns and verbs. The next course in the sequence is really the foundation course that combines a traditional approach to studying sentences with additional pratice in sentence combining. This is followed by a course emphasizing the development

(Continued on Page 3)

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Notices

ECCTYC CONFERENCE

The lovely Sir Francis Drake Hotel in San Francisco is the site of ECCTYC's STATEWIDE CONFERENCE, meeting from noon, Thursday, 5 November, through noon, Saturday, 7 November 1981. As program directors, Marlene Griffith (Laney College) and John Lovas (De Anza College) have planned discussion and workshop sessions guaranteed to be thought provoking, entertaining, and useful.

Your department chair has received details of the conference and all registration forms. If you are interested in attending please contact your chair immediately; the deadline for hotel reservations is 9 October and for conference registration is 19 October. The fifty-dollar registration fee includes coffee break refreshments, the buffet lunch on Friday, the various sessions on all three days, and the general sessions on Friday and Saturday.

This is the only conference organized BY two-year college English teachers FOR two-year college English teachers. This is the only conference planned to address directly and honestly YOUR interests and YOUR needs as English teachers in California two-year colleges. This is the only conference just for YOU. Join us.

i.e. NEEDS YOU

In the last issue of *i.e.* we announced that we hope to begin a new column called "What I Did When . . ." to give you an opportunity to share with your colleagues how you solved a particular teaching problem or handled a specific situation. Although various people suggested this idea to us, to date we have received nothing from our readers; and the column cannot write itself. Let us know if you like the idea by writing a 250-500 word piece demonstrating how you introduced poetry to a seemingly recalcitrant class or what you did the very first day of your basic writing class. Let us know if you don't like the idea by writing and telling us so.

Remember: *i.e.* reflects what YOU are interested in—what YOU send us by way of articles, letters, reviews, and poems. (An *i.e.* Stylesheet is available. Write to the editor and include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.)

LET'S GET TOGETHER

By BARBARA BUDROVICH
Feather River College

I think it is time for instructors of remedial reading and remedial writing to get together and consider how reading and writing skills can be combined to provide a more integrated learning experience for our basic skills students.

I am an instructor of remedial reading and writing, and I continue to be disturbed by the lack of writing opportunities offered reading students—and conversely, the diminishing reading opportunities offered writing students.

Of the standard reading comprehension texts that I have reviewed or used, few include writing exercises; most provide multiple choice questions. Students were directed to circle the phrase that stated a main idea, a major inference, or a significant detail. Many of the activities became frustrating guessing games as students spent more time in distinguishing between extremely faulty, somewhat faulty, almost correct, and perfectly correct choices than in dealing directly with the reading selections through their own writing.

Oddly enough, I have also realized that writing students are not required to do much reading since many writing teachers have discovered that students write best when they write about what they know best—themselves. Some instructors do not require texts with reading selections since individual topics are developed from the students' experiences. I have to admit that experiential writing can be based on and even be enhanced by exposure to all kinds of literatute.

So now in my reading classes, short paragraph assignments replace multiple choice questions, and in my writing classes, readings in short stories, articles, and poetry expand the experiential writing. But as I go from my reading classes to my writing classes, I am seeing that the two are beginning to look like each other. And I have begun to wonder why they should not be combined.

This issue of putting more writing into reading and more reading into writing (and the possibility of just merging the two as it is done in the higher levels with 1A and 1B) is critical and one that should be explored by both remedial reading teachers and remedial writing teachers. To see that such an exploration takes place, I am planning on sponsoring a conference during the academic year 1981-82. If you would be interested in sharing your concerns in this matter, please contact me at the following address:

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Quincy, CA 95971

STATEWIDE STANDARDS

By GERTRUDE S. FUJII
Los Angeles Valley College

The Intersegmental Committee on Writing, sponsored by the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC), in an effort to establish a frame of reference for proficiency in writing on a pre-freshman composition level, appointed a committee to develop criteria which could be applied to all segments of education. Composed of highly successful instructors from the four segments of public education, as well as from private universities and colleges, the group met for two days in Sacramento in November, 1980.

The resulting document called a "Statewide Standard for Entrance to Freshman Composition Courses," was approved by the Intersegmental Committee and sent to the Policy Evaluation Committee of CPEC for endorsement. Other segments, including the three English councils of the Univesity of California, the California State University and Colleges, and the California Community Colleges, and the Academic Senates have also received copies for comments and endorsement. The text of the criteria follows:

The transferability of credit between freshman composition courses offered on California community college, college, and university campuses presupposes a common standard for entrance to those courses. Only the pragmatic evaluation of a given student's writing can establish the line that defines adequate competence. The pertinent skills, however, can be specified. A student who is admitted to the transfer-level freshman composition course should be able to write essays showing adequacy in the following:

1. Selection of a controlling idea appropriate to the given writing task;
2. The coherent development of that idea to a reasoned conclusion;
3. Use of sentences that demonstrate some structural variety and that contain language appropriate to the audience and the purpose; and
4. Control of the conventions of standard written English (relative freedom from such errors as fragments, run-together sentences, faculty agreement, and improper pronoun reference) and of mechanics (capitalization, spelling, and punctuation).

For the development of these and other pertinent skills, it is essential that students receive extensive practice in the writing of essays. The assignment and necessary supervision of such writing require well-prepared faculty at both the secondary and postsecondary levels, manageable course loads, and reasonable teancher/student ratios.

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Letters

PRAISE WHERE DUE

Dear Editor:

The September 1980 issue of *inside english* contained an article by Helen Gordon and Dorothy Bray about the remedial program at Sacramento City College. ["Pilot Course in Basic Skills: Developing Fluency, Form, and Control," p. 5]. The course tasks were well-defined and, most refreshingly, opinions about the program were backed with statistical resulsts of a study conducted with a control group.

Members of our composition committee visited the program in Sacramento hoping to gather ideas for remodeling our own remedial composition offerings. To say the least, we were not disappointed. The program is exemplary. I'm thankful to *inside english* for the opportunity to hear about it.

Yours truly,
MARNI ROOTLIEB
Orange Coast College

P.S. The SCC December statistics on retention rates in their remedial classes were worth publishing another article. My hat off to SCC.

FAIR IS FAIR

Course Rotation at Mt. SAC

By JIM MOORE
Mt. San Antonio College

I don't think English departments anywhere differ a whole lot. At Mt. San Antonio College, I'm sure wisdom and silliness, narrowness and tolerance are parceled out in the same proportion as at your school. I also imagine that we are as

old as you are—we haven't added a full-timer in more than 10 years and the grey hairs are abundant.

As I wrote a year ago ["Get Back To Something You Love," *inside english*, March 1980, p. 3], we have had to innovate in a general vacuum—off in our little corner of Los Angeles County. Some things engendered by our closeness and ingrownness have had surprising effects. I would like to point out a course-rotation system that has had a regenerating effect. Maybe you can adapt it.

In the first place, I wasn't in favor of the system—before or after I became chair. I was wrong in my objections. I thought that rotating *everything* would bring unskilled teachers into "plum" courses. What happened was the reverse. Having the chance, dependent upon their willingness to prepare, to teach *anything*, many teachers revived from their middle-aged snooze and taught themselves a great deal. This is a cheap in-service program, if you're looking for one.

To the specifics: our department has a number of basic policies, and here are most of them. Nobody teaches more than two English 1A (comp) classes unless he/she wants to. Everyone is eligible to teach every course. If you innovate a course, you get first crack at it for four semesters before it goes into "rotation."

We got into all this because we were getting older and people weren't moving on the seniority ladder. Still, we use that ladder. Comp classes are distributed from the bottom up—that's how we decide who teaches two sections and who one; if you want more, you have a chance to choose more. But we go one-by-one from the bottom up, and over again until we have run out. Incidentally, teachers choose evening sections if they wish.

English 1B—for us a combination lit and comp course—is distributed from the top down. But recently we have taken to jumping the "top" of the ladder down three notches each time to make sure everyone gets a chance.

We call a number of our offerings "specialty" or "rotation" courses. This includes American and English Lit, Mass Media, Broadcast Journalism, Children's Lit—just about everything out of the ordinary. For these we keep a running chart—we started from the top of the seniority ladder, and the person who chose the course (we "auction" them off in order of the course number) is followed in eligibility, the next time, by the next senior person.

In practice, this means that typically three or four of our members will "share" a given course, and no one will go more than three or four semesters without having a chance to teach that course. Of course, the more section of that course, the more frequently the person has a chance to teach "his" course. If that's too long, he can always jump to another course, or invent one.

The other courses—for want of a better name, "remedial,"—are chosen last, from the top down (but one-by-one) in seniority order. The result is (for us) twenty to twenty-one schedules that are remarkably varied and that reflect what the teacher really wants to teach, as well as what he is able to teach.

Believe me, it's not perfect. And we keep making little adjustments to it. But it recognizes that we are professionals and it enlivens our years. If you'd like me to talk to you about it further, please ask me.

Theoretical Foundations

(Continued from Page 1)

of embedding sentence elements to gain more mature sentence structure. The two names most frequently associated with research in this sentence-combining, sentence-embedding fields are Francis Christensen[3] and Kellogg Hunt.[4] The spelling component likewise begins with a basic study of phonics before going on to the study of some simple patterns of spelling and finally to more difficult principals of spelling.

The following chart illustrates the spiral curriculum for each of the writing, spelling, sentence structure, and vocabulary components.

THE ENGLISH PROGRAM

	English 87	English 80, 81	English 70	English 1A
WRITING	Controlled Writing Simple Narratives	Journal Writing Anecdotes, Dialogues Process Paper	Structure of Paragraphs	Structure of Essays Research Paper
SENTENCE STRUCTURE	Correct Forms in Simple Sentences	Foundation Course in Sentence Structure Sentence-Combining	Embedding Sentence Elements	Remedial (Only as needed)
SPELLING	Phonics	Simple Patterns of Spelling	Principles of Spelling	Remedial (Only as needed)
VOCABULARY	Confusing Pairs of Words	Basic Patterns of Vocabulary — Prefix-Roots	Incorporated Into Readings	Incorporated Into Readings

THE METHOD

The curriculum just described incorporates the principles of both humanitarian and behavioral psychologists. The behaviorists insist that everything taught should be measurable. One of the problems, however, is that not all types of learning lend themselves to precise measurement. This program uses behavioral pychology to assess the part of the program that it can, notably the spelling, sentence structure and usage components. They are based on the mastery learning concepts of Benjamin Bloom[5] and John Carroll,[6] which assume the most positive and optimistic outlook about students; that almost all of them can master the subject if given sufficient time and sufficient learning experiences.

The sentence structure programs of the two lowest courses are broken up into short modules that students can complete in a week or two. These modules are on tape, and students work on them in a laboratory with guidance from an instructor and a teaching assistant. Students know the mastery level and take frequent formative tests (short quizzes which provide immediate feedback) to assure that they are learning the material adequately. Only after student and instructor conference to determine whether the student is ready for a test is he given that opportunity. After taking the test, the student, in consultation with the instructor, decides whether further work is necessary before going on to the next unit. Additional tests are available for students who need help before retesting.

In this kind of learning experience, students are placed in active roles—not only by pacing themselves in the materials and seeking help when problems arise but also by deciding when they feel competent enough to take tests. The instructor is likewise placed in an active teaching role. Rather than lecturing to an entire class about one principle of usage or sentence structure that a third of the group may find too difficult to comprehend and which another third may already understand, the instructor is teaching to small groups or to a single student. This personal contact is vitally important in a laboratory course. Otherwise, a student can feel isolated in a mechanized environment. The challenge for the instructor is to identify those critical times when students need help so that the instructor can truly become what Carl Rogers calls a facilitator of learning.[7]

Student-instructor contact is fundamental in the writing component of the program also. In all courses, but particulary in the two highest levels, a modified conferencing technique similar to that suggested by Roger Garrison[8] is used to provide one-to-one feedback to students on their writing. The instructors in the program continue to instruct the class on writing principles as well as to conference with each student on papers before they are turned in for evaluation. This again places both student and instructor in active roles.

STUDENT LEARNING

When students are more involved in their learning experiences, they should also become more responsible learners. William Glasser's principles of reality therapy place responsibility for actions directly on the individual.[9] To promote responsibility for behavior, William Glasser suggests that a person must go through a process of identifying the behavior, then identifying the consequences of that behavior, forming a judgment of the consequences, and finally determining the actions necessary to change the behavior. The student folders used in the laboratory classes are ideal for encouraging students to be responsible learners. A folder containing the course requirement and a student's up-to-date progress is on file for the use of both student and instructor. This is a model system for the instructor to discuss the student's goals, her present progress, the consequences of the present progress, and the actions necessary for successful completion of the course. The most important function for the instructor is to help the student take actions that are appropriate to attain her goals goals. If students can be taught responsibility for their academic progress, the class will not only accomplish improving writing skills but also improving learning skills in general.

Accepting responsibility for learning is a part of the internal personal motivation which Donald Felker[10], William Purkey[11], and Stanley Coppersmith[12] maintain is necessary for the enhancement of self-concept. In a paper in which Coppersmith linked self-concept with educational implications, he indicated that the act of doing in itself provides feedback and places the appraisal within the individual. One of his suggestions was to provide a variety of programmed materials that an individual can pursue at his own pace, internally gauging competence with feedback. Our program seeks to provide such experiences for its students. In his studies, Coopersmith also found that people felt more worthy when challenging yet reasonable demands were placed on them.

The challenge for all English instructors for the eighties is to base the standards and the methods for their course on current theoretical research to define what is reasonable for students so that successful experiences will lead to improved self-concept and in turn improved writing skills.

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Teaching English As a Strange Language

By ROSELLE M. LEWIS
Valley College

"Me teach ESL?" The grammar was less than impeccable when my department chairman assigned me English-as-a-second-language classes several years ago. I was prepared methodologically, but not psychologically, to teach the increasing number of foreign students filling our classrooms. (At Valley, we offered one ESL class ten years ago compared to nine this semester.) The need was evident, but as a part-timer restricted to teaching six units, I would be forced to relinquish my basic comp classes, which I viewed as the English teacher's birthright.

SOME POSITIVES

Despite serious reservations, I soon found many positive factors in the ESL program. First, foreign students, frequently from society's middle-to-upper social rungs, have received a good education in their respective countries. The storms of war, revolutions, and political upheaval bring together in our classes people who often are our professional peers. Through the years, enrolling in my classes have been a Vietnamese dentist, an Argentinian M.D. an Egyptian pharmacist, nuns from Latin American countries and Mexico, even a Buddhist monk, hailing from Thailand, who appeared in saffron robe and sandals. Other professionals have included teachers, social workers, nutritionists, nurses from Korea, Japan, the Republic of China, as well as students and businessmen from countries as diverse geographically and linguistically as Finland and Ethiopia.

Second, working with motivated adults makes for very pleasant teaching. In the classroom, there is a sense of urgency and purpose. Some students prepare to pass the TOEFL exam, required for college entrance and advanced professional work; other want to improve their job situation or make a better adjustment to American life. But whatever their purpose, most students display a high degree of interest, if not pleasure, in learning "the English."

"How do you teach students who speak twelve-to-fifteen different languages? Are there special methods?" colleagues often ask. Well, there was an on-the-job apprenticeship, a sink-or-swim process the first time around. It was mostly the former that first night when I thought the Tower of Babel had collapsed as I mispronounced my way through the roster. Learning fast, however, I mimicked a clanging cymbal for *Dang*, a lilting lute for *Lieu* and *Nguyen*, and began to correctly gutteralize Russian and Polish names.

This, however, remains my only concession to other languages because students in my classes are forced to speak, read, write, and **think** in English. This insistence results in situations touched by comedic pathos. The Soviet Armenian couple, separated by their long work day, attempt to embrace in the corridor during break time. They must do so "in English only." Israeli friends are dissuaded from their attempts to socialize in Hebrew; they put up an argument.

Another positive aspect to ESL teaching is the interest students exhibit in the formal study of grammar. Phrases, clauses, irregular verb formation are subjects of fascination. The days of pedagogical hucksterism, when I attempt to "sell" grammar as a "fun" subject, are over.

Another benefit is our mutual respect for English as a hard and "strange" language, perhaps another meaning of the "S" in ESL. I no longer take for granted phrases like, "we're going on vacation" vs. "we're going to vacation at the beach." Homonym pairs occur with mind-boggling regularity. Besides the terrible "2's" There are **there, their,** and **they're;** the ubiquitously-misused duo **its** vs. **it's;** and the awful confrontation of **raise** vs. **raze**. Then there are the idioms, thousands of initially puzzling statements like, "The concert was a **sellout**" vs. "I think he's a political **sellout.**" And think about **overhang** vs. **hangover**. Of course, idioms are universal to all tongues, but they are "tough as nails" in English. And among rules meant to be broken there's the faithless "Rule of S" violated in the subjunctive mood: "He **swims** well" vs. "Oh, that he **swim** well."

SOME NEGATIVES

In truth, many students are barely going to stay afloat in English. I'm no Pollyanna and must point out some "negatives." It's depressing to deal with prose so flawed I shudder before attacking a stack of papers. The chasm between the idea and the word's reality is sometimes unbridgeable for foreign students. Those who write "**I make** my homework" or "**I am living** in this country for ten years" are headed for less than minimal competency. Further, ESL teaching is physically exhausting and requires constant use of body language and dramatic projection. So far, I've found no audio-visual material or time within the classroom context to indulge in the pedagogical respite of asking a student, "What do you think? Let's hear your opinion."

TERRIBLE AND WONDERFUL

But on balance, the motivated student, good classroom "vibes" and warm personal relationships make ESL worthwhile and very rewarding. One anecdote sums up the experience. At nine one night, a Spanish-speaking student, who had looked up three different meanings for the word *baste*, threw aside her paperback dictionary in dismay and a touch of anger: "But **deese ees** terrible language," she said.

"Yes, I had to agree, "terrible and wonderful at the same time."

Long Khanh* In the Writing Lab

Sitting beside this slight and courteous dragon,
I search his paper for a place to stand.
Sink in a syntax never known to England.
Attempt to shore up a tottering construction.
Lie flattened in the collapse—deflated, stunned.
Lunge, almost close the thought within my hand
before it flies. I come to understand
that *The Grammar of Vietnamese*, overdue, has done
me little good. Long, what you've begun's
impossible.

"Please to discuss prepositions,
Teacher." You do not doubt. Respectful conviction
looks out of eyes that do not sense defection.
I rise again, again brush off the dust.
My pen writes *up* and *on*—and we discuss.

*Dragon Happy

NANCY KING
East Los Angeles College

Bilingual Bridge: Faculty-Curriculum-Lab

By NANCY H. NADEAU
Imperial Valley College

In any area where the number of non-English speakers is increasing rapidly, one obvious duty of the community college is to provide the best possible instruction in academic English to those wanting to take advantage of the technical and professional opportunities America offers in such abundance. This duty can be side-stepped in two ways: 1) by refusing admittance to students who haven't mastered English (often to a TOEFL-scored level) or 2) by accepting ESL/LES students, but giving them only "review" or "study skills" courses and then expecting native-speaker fluency. But when non-English speakers apply to a two-year college (many never get that far, an administrative-counseling issue of political import), the burden of integrating them into the English programs falls squarely on our shoulders.

Imperial Valley College, ten miles from the Mexican border has enrolled an increasing number of monolingual Spanish-speakers each year for the past five years. The average teacher at IVC faces a class of students whose mastery of English ranges from advanced English as a Second Language speakers (ESL) to limited-English speakers (LES) to fully bilingual English-Spanish speakers. Many students who graduate with AA degrees from IVC started out at the college with little or no knowledge of English.

The English Division has been developing a three-part approach to instructing those students not yet fully bilingual: 1) teachers competent in both English and ESL, 2) a curriculum (with placement procedures) designed to accommodate non-English speakers, and 3) a Reading-Writing Lab set up to help students at every level of English mastery.

1) **TEACHERS:** Of IVC's regular staff of fifteen English teachers, ten teach courses for ESL or LES students. Some speak Spanish; others aren't fluent but have found that a theoretical and practical knowledge of the Spanish-speaker's problems and acceptance of the fact that the non-native speakers haven't the linguistic strengths—or weaknesses—of native speakers is sufficient for quality teaching.
2) **CURRICULUM:** Students are placed in reading or writing courses at different levels, depending on their degree of mastery of English.
   a) A student needing basic ESL work can enter at the beginning, intermediate, or advanced level of an intensive three-semester ESL program, taking courses in grammar-writing, vocabulary, reading, and conversation. IVC is proud of its ESL program; it has from forty to fifty ESL classes this semester, with increases every semester.
   b) Students with ability from LES to full command of English may take courses at one of four levels in reading and at one of five in writing. Placement includes a holistically scored essay and a Nelson-Denny test. Students with strong language-interference problems can be specially tested (using an in-house ESL test) and referred to advanced ESL courses or to the Reading-Writing Lab, the third component of the "bilingual bridge."
3) **LAB:** Reading-Writing Lab, in addition to its use for ESL-LES students, addresses a wide variety of problems for any student needing help with English. Students drop in or are referred for work ranging from writing a history book report, to writing sentences using idioms taught in an ESL course, to working on individual language problems (such as spelling and grammar errors), to preparing a journal in psychology, to revising a term paper or essay exam. We think of our Lab instruction as falling into

(Continued on Page 5)

BILINGUAL BRIDGE

(Continued from Page 4)

three categories: 1) ESL (simple reading, survival-skills modules, and exercises on prepositions, idioms, word choice, word order, and so on); 2) basic or remedial reading and writing (reading and writing standard English); and 3) rhetoric and rapid reading (essay organization, effective sentencing, analysis of readings, figures of speech, and so on).

The Lab is supervised by two English Division teachers, one in reading, one in writing, each having three units of released time for Lab work. The Lab has a full-time classified supervisor ("Lab Assistant") who oversees the clerical aides and the Lab's extensive record-keeping. A State grant ("Instructional Innovation" fund) provided two, then four paraprofessional tutors for two years; this year the IVC administration obtained district funding for the paraprofessional tutors and increased their number to five. These "supertutors" are the heart of the Lab. Often they are English or education majors at the nearby Calexico campus of San Diego State University; they are professionally motivated, knowledgeable in English-linguistics-pedagogy, and impressively enthusiastic and dedicated. They help the students, work with the student (peer) tutors, and in turn are trained by the faculty supervisors in weekly meetings and in individual conferences.

As a "bilingual bridge," our Lab is set up as follows: 1) Our personnel are trained to be understanding of and competent with students who are not yet fully bilingual. 2) They are trained to use special techniques and materials with ESL and LES students. 3) We have ESL-class coordinated conversation groups, group vocabulary and grammar training, and Lab assignments designed by ESL teachers to complement their classwork. 4) LES students are referred from all five levels of writing courses (including English 1A) for work with lingering language-interference problems such as the use of idioms, prepositions, verbs, count-mass nouns, verbals, and the like. Each student's problems seem to be different, and each Lab folder reflects the student's individual work and suggestions for future study. 5) We use an increasingly varied collection of "ESL Troubleshooting" modules (written by paraprofessional tutors or the Writing Lab supervisor) as well as published ESL texts and an in-house manual.

The Lab has been doubling its use yearly by ESL, LES, and fluent English speakers. Students aren't permitted to use the limited facility (a converted classroom with tables and reading carels) as a "study hall," since there isn't enough room during rush hours for students there for specific tutoring. The one-unit (transferable) Lab course that students usually sign up for brings in appreciable ADA. The hustle and bustle of the Lab makes it even more helpful for ESL or LES students because they find themselves immersed in a congenial, active, English-speaking situation in which they have a natural opportunity to practice and improve their English. Except at the beginning and intermediate ESL levels, all tutoring and conversing in the Lab are done in English.

IVC's English Division is constantly working to strengthen its bilingual bridge for non-English speakers, to meet the demographic changes most community colleges in California increasingly are faced with. To rephrase a teacherly addage, "If not now, when can post-high-school non-English speakers learn academic English? If not at a community college, where? If not through an intensive ESL program, a flexible faculty, and a carefully designed Lab, how?"

Teachers, Students, and Writer's Intuition

By KEVIN RYAN
Santa Monica College

"How many paragraphs should my essay be?"

"Should I write on the first topic or the second?"

"Should I use the word *refuge* or *sanctuary?*"

The answer to these and all such student questions should be: "Use your writer's intuition—and then you tell me."

What is writer's intuition? It is that instinct that just told me to start a new paragraph here, and to start it with a question, because it would be more effective. It would "work." There would be nothing incorrect about making both of these one long paragraph; it is just that two is better in this case. A writer's intuition is a developed instinct for what is "correct" or "works" in each writing assignment. It is the secret knowledge that students think the teacher is holding back: "Last time you told me not to do this, now you say it's okay. Why don't you just tell me how to do it so it will be correct all the time?"

Because each composition is different. Tone, word choice, point of view, emphasis, the introduction, the conclusion, and much more change with each assignment. There are no rules that can be slavishly followed each time in order to produce a good essay. There are many rules to help a student write a "safe" essay, but while his writing is correct it will also be lifeless and formulaic—Engfish, the five paragraph essay. I am not saying the teacher should emulate Joyce and teach the unorthodox, but once the student enters college, it is about time he learns how writers really work, how compositions are actually created.

Writer's intuition is something that is learned and not taught. The teacher can only act as an editor for the student. All the restrictions the beginning college writer brings with him from high school (never write fragments, never start sentences with a coordinating conjunction, never write one word sentences nor one sentence paragraphs) should be lifted so he can follow his instincts, though rudimentary, to see how experienced writers work, to see there is nothing mystical about the process: it is trial and error for the least and the most experienced writers. When used properly, what is wrong with a one word sentence? Nothing.

And teachers often speak in the classroom of the one sentence paragraph as if it were an inviolable rule that no writers should break, but if it is written correctly and reads smoothly so the reader can follow it without getting tangled in an undergrowth of non-sequiturs and dangling modifiers, what difference does it make as long as it covers one complete idea?

The difficult part is learning how to tell what is correct. The teacher, as editor, is the expert who should look at a student's draft and "see" where he is heading in his essay and then give suggestions that will work for that particular essay. Let them write one word sentences. If it works, tell them. If not, show them why and let them rewrite it. When someone asks how many paragraphs he must write for the next assignment, tell him to go home and write a complete rough draft of the essay and show it to you the next class date. He will solve the problem himself while writing, and if not, well, you're the editor. At every chance, point out to the student when he is using his writer's intuition and when you are using yours.

The process will be very difficult in the beginning. The teacher will have no doctrine to support him and instead of saying, "You should do it this way because the rule says never . . . ," he will find himself saying things like, "It sounds better this way," or "It seems to me the word *refuge* fits better in this case. What do you think?" At first, the teacher will feel insecure in his role as writing authority because he knows the students expect rules, and he may sense that they are thinking, "How come this guy doesn't know how to write?" And the students find writer's intuition a difficult idea to comprehend because they have been taught since first grade that you learn to write by following certain rules. However, after a few classes, they do begin to understand. And it is important they do, for writer's intuition is the key to writing what is "correct." After all, how would you explain to a beginning writer Joyce's 1500 word sentence that ends *Ulysses*? And once that writer leaves your class and begins reading experienced writers who use fragments and break all the rules, won't he be more confused?

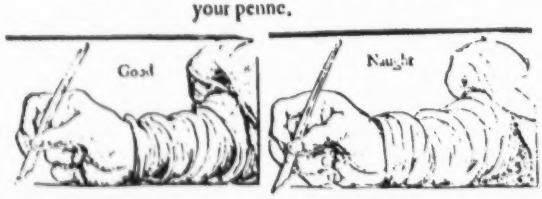
All the rules that beginning writers learn in most writing classes are based on writer's intuition anyway. They are nothing more than what works best most of the time in good compositions: most good essays have the theme stated in the first paragraph, most good essays do not have one word sentences, most good essays never use etc., and etc. The whole problem is that because these are presented as dogma rather than as flexible guidelines, students have come to think that there are specific rules governing all essays. that the teacher has the answer to how to write a perfect essay each time,

and that he is just teasing the student with sadistic Socratic questioning in a morbid attempt to get him to discover for himself the secret way to write a good composition. It is time the teachers let them in on the secret.

If we do not start to develop their writer's intuition in Freshman Composition (probably the last class on writing they will have), we would be like witch doctors who, instead of telling the natives that their lower back pain will go away if they exercise and showing them the exercises, have them come to us weekly and make them go through arcane and cabalistic movements which ease their pain. And they leave thinking how smart we are and how mysterious the process is an how they would never be able to do that on their own. We are not going to be around for help after the semester ends. They must realize that they have the capacity to tell themselves what is correct in their writing, that it is something they must develop through much practice. It will take much longer than seventeen weeks to develop, but if they are constantly being shown examples of their writer's intuition throughout the semester, they will at least be aware of how it functions and will begin to develop it. When they are at home wondering how to approach an essay, they will at least know that there is more than one correct way to write it and that the teacher does not have one correct solution in mind. The only difference between the student as writer and the teacher as writer is in the amount of writing experience each has had. There is nothing mysterious about the process at all.

Grammar, spelling, punctuation and never-do-this and always-do-that rules are very teachable and easy to grasp, but do not get at the heart of how to write an essay. It is an extremely personal craft that primarily follows only the one "rule" Aristotle pointed out: all compositions must have a beginning, middle, and end. The rest is up to the individual writer and his writer's intuition.

HOVV YOV OVGHT TO HOLD
your penne,



-REviews-

"REviews" features discussions of books and media programs that are suitable for use in writing or literature courses or that have special interest for teachers of English. These reviews should be from 100 to 500 words and should evaluate the book's or program's effective use in a classroom, in a learning resource center, by an individual student, or by the instructor. Include with the review all pertinent publication information, the number of pages or length of running time, and the cost.

AT LAST: A TEXTBOOK FOR THE CONFERENCE

By BERT WOODRUFF
Fresno City College

If you need a textbook designed for conference-centered composition instruction—a textbook based on the beliefs that students best learn to write when they work at their own speeds with periodic feedback from the instructor, and that instructors shouldn't "explain to students what they can learn themselves through reading"—then you need Chuck Duwe and Ed Dornan's new text, *One to One*.

When these two Orange Coast College instructors opted to follow Roger Garrison's conference methods and "threw away our readers and handbooks," they avoided the futility of lock-stepping their students through uniform tasks and lectures, but they also encountered the frustration of "delivering thirty-one minilectures at thirty-one different times" while the students waiting for conferences began "to fidget and emit exasperated sounds from their windpipes" (Instructor's Manual, p. 6). Out of both their delight and their frustration has emerged this new text, a helpful combination of the traditional and innovative, designed to support teachers and students using the conference approach.

Those "minilectures" appear in one of the *traditional* sections, "Part Four: Index for Writers." These carefully-written presentations cover the usual common problems beginning writers face—like agreement, apostrophe, comma, and comma splice—and also include welcome sections on, for example, "clutter," coherence, conclusions, introductions, and "numbed language." The instructor assigns sections as the need arises in a conference, and the student reads and applies the material in the next draft. The instructor then can assess the student's understanding in their next conference. "When we meet with a student whose work clearly shows a lack of concentration while reading the [explanations and instructions], we return the paper and ask him or her to re-read the material before re-writing" (Instructor's Manual, p. 12). After a few of these nudges, the students learn that they cannot get through the course without careful reading, that the instructor will not lead them through the textbook by the hand, and that the purpose of the conferences is timely response to their writing, not explanations of the text. That's the hope. But, even though the authors have tested the material in their classes for several years—many of us heard them introduce some of this at the ECCTYC Conference in Orange County in the fall of 1979—I doubt if the text will be appropriate for basic writers who are having difficulty with reading too. It should work well, however, with English 1 students and with those students in preparatory courses just below the English 1 level.

Another traditional section is "Part 2: Writing Tasks." "Although Writing Tasks moves from simple to complex units and each is numbered, the tasks are independent of one another; consequently, they needn't be assigned sequentially. In fact, once we get students under way in this section, the assignments we make depend on their individual strengths and weaknesses" (Instructor's Manual, p. 11). This part begins with two brief papers (single paragraphs) using specific and then typical examples and then moves to the traditional rhetorical forms, so that the text provides ample assignments for the differing requirements of English departments and of individual students. As with Part 4, and the entire book, these tasks are carefully written and also contain good samples from professional and student writers.

"Part 3: Daily Writing" is an *innovative* section and contains instructions for eight weeks of journal writing, daily thirty-minute sessions students can do in class when not in conference or working on the regular writing tasks. Students should be able to do this work without any further explanation. The purposes of this section are "to show students that one way to find something to write about is to go ahead and write" (Instructor's Manual, p. 17), and to provide raw material for the writing tasks in Part 2. The authors do not give many hints about how to move the students from their journals to the traditional rhetorical forms although there are several innovative essays, such as the "associational essay" and the "personal essay" on dreams, that specifically direct the students to use journal material.

The most important innovation is "Part 1: Getting Started." By following the accompanying manual, the instructor can use this first part to establish the conference relationship and to teach a composing process students can use throughout the course and in their other writing.

I have referred several times to the Instructor's Manual. If you order an examination copy of this text, be sure to request the instructor's edition. The Instructor's Manual is a real gem. I have been using Garrison's conference method since the fall of 1977. Persistently, two problems have nagged me: the enormous drain of energy that forty to sixty short conferences exact and the difficulty of encouraging students to solve their own problems rather than to rely on me even more because of the frequent contact. The Instructor's Manual contains an important section titled "Tips on Holding

Conferences," and there is even a reading list (for the instructor) that emphasizes the creative process and interpersonal dynamics.

While I would have liked to see, in the Instructor's Manual, more detailed advice about how to make the initial assessment of each student's strengths and weaknesses that the authors recommend for the second week and about how to coordinate the writing tasks with those needs, the Instructor's Manual is full of helpful information about how to use the all-important "Getting Started," about how the different writing tasks relate to one another, and about conducting conferences; the textbook itself is full of relevant directions and examples and is arranged to encourage the student's independence. Together, textbook and manual clearly deserve the sub-title of this fine new text: *Resources for Conference-Centered Writing.*

Charles W. Duwe and Edward A. Dornan. *One to One.* Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1981. 354 pages plus Instructor's Manual.

And Still

6:30 a.m., Monday,
Trotting towards the cafeteria,
I see the bus, wrecked last week.
Smashed safti-glass windshield,
Crumpled blue metal,
Caved in,
Headlight slanting down,
Black bumper bent.

It looked like a fighter
After a Saturday bashing.
He peers into Monday,
One good eye seeing,
Sagging lower lip,
Pain from his wired jaw
Cou. sing through every inch
Of discolored flesh.
His face, his reward.

The bus, though, won
Its fight,
Streaks of wrong-colored
Paint taking my mind
Back to newspaper pictures
Of the shredded pickup,
Headlines of death.

The bus rests, solid,
No runs for a while,
Jutting its less marred side,
Unmoved by its winning belt.

BILL DECKER
College of the Sequoias

For Graduate Women

If you are a graduate of a regionally accredited four year college or university, you should be interested in the American Association of University Women. We're business women, artists, homemakers, professional women . . . we share the commonality of a degree . . . we're interested in the needs of our community . . . the nation . . . and the world.

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I have a degree from a regionally accredited college or university, in the U.S.A., or from a recognized foreign institution.

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Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Graduate of _____ Year _____

JOIN US!

THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

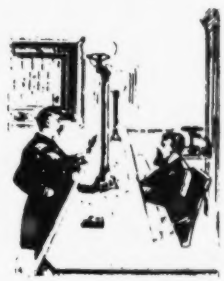
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
Confronting the Issues

Welcome back to campus for the 1981-82 academic year! Some changes have occurred on the ECCTYC Board. Dick McIntosh of Cypress College has been elected Treasurer and has joined the Executive Committee. Several regions have elected new directors: in Region I, Ken Cooney of Shasta College joins Gordon Taylor; in Region VI, Taylor Klose of Moorpark College joins Jinny Webber; in Region VII, Nina Theiss of Santa Monica College and Steve Statham of L.A. Valley College are both new directors; in Region VIII, the two new directors are Kevin Burne of Long Beach City College and Steve Montgomery of El Camino College; in Region X, Shirley Sykes of San Diego Mesa College joins Elaine McLevie. These new Board members request your support and assure you they will continue ECCTYC's policy of service to English faculty.

Three issues will continue to confront the ECCTYC Board during this year: the issue of load/class size, the issue of the literacy requirements and new general education program at CSUC campuses, and the issue of the part-time/hourly instructor in our own departments.

LOAD/CLASS SIZE

As you may well recall, the 1979-80 academic year saw a series of nasty confrontations at the local level on the issue of load/class size: in the Peralta District and in the San Mateo District, to name two that received considerable publicity. The same type of dispute was narrowly avoided in Santa Barbara and was one of the reasons for a prolonged contract dispute in San Diego. ECCTYC took a strong stand on the issue involved, strong enough that I was personally threatened with a lawsuit by the former Chancellor of the Peralta District; ECCTYC also sought and received the active support of the CSUC and UC English Councils for the position we took. For some reason—perhaps the fact that negotiated contracts covered the 1980-81 year, or perhaps the fact that the English Councils initiated



such a strong and vocal protest to increases in load/class size—the 1980-81 year brought very few load/class size problems. However, we think the quiet period is over and that, in light of recent funding cuts, we will see districts attempting to increase teaching load/class sizes in English during this year. In preparation for such moves, we have activated, vitalized, and expanded our Committee on Load/Class Size; the committee, headed by Bob Mognis of Modesto College, stands ready to assist individual departments as local administrations prepare to increase numbers and substantially decrease quality.

LITERACY AND GE

A second issue concerns the literacy requirements and new general education requirements at the CSUC campuses, campuses to which a sizable number of our students transfer. In light of these new requirements, it is imperative that our liaison with individual state campuses be clearly established and our input be vocal and strong. For several years ECCTYC has had an agreement with the CSUC English Council that an ECCTYC appointee would serve on each local CSUC Literacy Committee; this agreement received the approval of the State Chancellor's Office of both our divisions. Unfortunately, the agreement which is so good in theory has been difficult to implement. The major obstacle is that literacy committees are campus-wide committees directly under the aegis of the campus Academic Senate, not under the individual English Departments. At the onset of the agreement, seven of the nineteen CSUC campuses requested a community college liaison member: Dominguez Hills, Fresno State, Long Beach State, Northridge, San Diego State, San Francisco State, and San Jose State. To date, these remain the only campuses involved in the program. Though ECCTYC and the CSUC English Council continue efforts to have more campuses participate, the organizations operate at a disadvantage, being removed from the local campus politics and from any real contact with the academic senate functioning on each campus. May I suggest that you provide the councils with very real assistance. Contact the English Department Chair of your closest CSUC campus, and through that chair the president of the campus senate, urging them to gain approval for appointment of a community college English instructor to the campus literacy committee; once approval is gained, have someone in authority—the chair of the literacy committee, the president of the senate, the English Department chair—send me a brief memo requesting a nominee from a local community college, or even suggesting such a nominee if they know someone (yourself, perhaps, if you are truly interested in the assignment).

PART-TIME/HOURLY INSTRUCTORS

The last issue I wish to broach is the most sensitive of all, that of the plight of the part-time/hourly instructor in our departments, on our campuses. These truly dedicated professionals continue on many of our campuses to operate in a state bordering on penal servitude. They have no assurance of an assignment from semester to semester, serving at the whim of local administrators; they frequently receive poor schedules, teaching what no one wants to teach and working hours no one wants; when they work, they often work for substandard wages, flat hourly fees instead of pro-rata pay; frequently they have no benefits; and they rarely, if ever, are allowed active participation in department or campus matters. For years, battles have been fought at local levels to better the lot of our part-time/hourly colleagues. At worst, the battles have been futile; at best, they have succeeded only in producing gross inequities from district to district. If the history of the problem has taught us nothing else, it should have taught us that the local level is not the arena in which this problem can be solved. It is time that we pool our resources and demand action at the state level, action that will be binding on local districts and that will provide for professional and equitable treatment of our part-time colleagues.

This will not be an easy year for ECCTY or for any community college instructor, but it will be tolerable if we confront the issues before us in a reasoned enlightened manner.

—$ACRAMENTO $CENE—
The Board of Governors Observed

By GORDON TAYLOR
Yuba College

In June, the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges met in Sacramento. *Sacramento Scene* took advantage of the time and place and went to see how the sub-powers that be operate. In many ways, it sounds like a local board: the members complain of having to make decisions that were, it seems, pre-ordained by the Feds and by the State's Legislature, which means that their decisions are not decisions at all and that, more generally, their movements are hampered by too many outside forces. However, within those regions where the Board can maneuver, it wields a fair force. It sets various sorts of guidelines that the local CC's have to follow regarding things like allocations for EOPS, for programs for handicapped students (actually called "handicapped student programs"), for the different vocational programs, for projects to be supported by the Fund for the Improvement of Instruction. It proposes legislation, lobbies (through the Chancellor's Office) for and against other people's bills, and seems influential and successful. It establishes programs for capital outlay and controls to some extent the structure of the California Community College system. It sets criteria for the types of courses the CC's may offer and is responsible for a number of educational matters, as well.

The item most pertinent to *i.e.*'s readers concerned the Fund for the Improvement of Instruction. The Board adopted the list of projects to be supported by the Fund, which will have about $800,000 for grants and $810,000 for loans. The Advisory and Review Council selected eighty-two projects that it thought worthy. Thirty-seven districts (fifty colleges) received grants ($750,000) and seven districts (eight colleges) loans ($199,270). Los Angeles District had ten projects funded, the most for a single district, and Santa Ana five, the most for a single college. Most districts had two and most colleges one. Among those of specific interest are twelve projects related to language. Antelope Valley got $15,000 for a campus-wide writing program; Indian Valley, $8,800 for team teaching in writing, reading, and research techniques; Santa Rosa, $12,000 for a College Writing Center. There are a number of programs that propose to teach English in specific ways or for specific purposes: ESL with packets and tapes (Santa Ana, $3,500), with computers (San Diego Adult and Continuing Education Center, $13,000), vocational English with computers (Evergreen Valley, $8,000), English to foreign students in biology (Cerritos, $3,400); for learning disabled adults, an Expressive Language Manual (San Francisco Community College Centers, $11,000); for the hearing impaired, English (Ohlone, $2,500); a synonym dictionary (Los Angeles Pierce, $6,000); for inadequately prepared speech students, teaching techniques and materials (Merritt, $11,000). A consortium of Merced, College of the Sequoias, Fresno City, and San Joaquin Delta got $15,000 ($3,750 each) to field test some "instructional materials and teaching strategies for students with language and mathematics deficiencies." Antelope Valley was lent $24,000 to set up a campus-wide writing program and Ventura District, $56,000 for a computer based library network.

If you are still awake, dear reader, two other projects are of more general interest. American River got $20,000 to expand a Teaching Resources Center and will write a handbook of "operational guidelines" to send to other CC's. Four colleges received $86,000 (Los Angeles City, $15,000; Los Angeles Valley, $15,000; West Los Angeles, $30,000; Chabot, $26,000) to set up Project Dissemination Conferences and publications.

The Board considered a number of legislative bills and took no unusual positions. Mr. Arnold Bray, Director of Legislative and Public Affairs in the Chancellor's Office, reported that there was not very much *good* legislation and that the CC's are under attack, and he suggested that

the Board would have to fight to preserve the system. All that seems to mean avoiding students' fees and tuition and making sure that the CC's get enough money to carry on their business.

The most important item considered by the Board was the financing bills, since passed by the legislature just in time to meet the constitutional deadline for passing the State's budget. All the financing bills (SB 841, 842, Alquist), along with some other provisions, were ultimately combined into AB 1626 (Hughes); it is a very complex bill, and the Chancellor's Office is preparing a detailed

(Continued on Page 8)

News From Our Regions

REGION I: NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Directors: Ken Cooney, Shasta College; Gordon Taylor, Yuba College.

On 29 May 1981 Region I held a successful regional meeting at Butte College. Although Joe Rich, Chair of Humanities, had to be away that day, he had arranged for the meeting place and provided a sumptuous luncheon. Hannie Voyles of the English department acted as hostess.

Fourteen English faculty members from five community colleges met with English teachers from four high schools to discuss mutual concerns. The high school teachers suggested using aides recruited from community college students to help in writing labs and in classrooms. They recommended that the students receive credit for their work in the high schools.

REGION VII: NORTH LOS ANGELES

Directors: Stephen Statham, Valley College; Nina Theiss, Santa Monica College.

Four presentations describing team-taught humanities courses with literature as one component highlighted Region VII's annual spring mini-conference. Approximately fifty members of ECCTYC's North Los Angeles Region gathered at Pasadena City College during the afternoon of 7 May to hear some stimulating ideas about team-teaching as one way to increase literature course enrollments.

All four speakers—Charles Cobb (L.A. Pierce College), William Heffernan (Saddleback College), Dr. Phyllis Mael (Pasadena City College), and Linda Nibley (Glendale Community College)—not only commented on the positive responses of students in these courses but also shared their own enthusiasm as well. "Challenging" and "rewarding" were the key words used to describe their team-teaching experiences.

Lee Frank (L.A. Southwest College) planned the program with PCC hosts, Rae Ballard and Leonard Franco. Barbara Bilson, Frances Kurilich, and Nina Theiss (Santa Monica College) provided the refreshments.

Following the conference, regional co-directors Leonard Franco and Sister Joseph Adele Edwards (Mount St. Mary's College) conducted an election for two new directors with the following results: Stephen Statham, Chair, Department of English, Los Angeles Valley College, and Nina Theiss, Chair, Department of English, Santa Monica College.

REGION VIII: SOUTH LOS ANGELES

Directors: Kevin Burne, Long Beach City College; Steve Montgomery, El Camino College.

Orange Coast College English instructor Raymond Obstfeld, who has had one book of poems published as well as three novels, will have two more novels coming out next year: *Dead Bolt* and *The Devil to Pay*. Recently, *The Not So Private Eye* magazine bought his short story "Rhyme Scheme." Also appearing this past year were Raymond's short story "Someone's in the Kitchen with Dinah" *(Mystery Magazine)* and two articles, "Opus in G Minor for Blunt Instruments: Motive in Detective Fiction" and "The Best of Hitchcock" (both in latest issue of *The Armchair Detective*). Raymond has just finished his ninth novel and is now at work on a creative writing textbook.

SACRAMENTO SCENE

(Continued from Page 7)

financial analysis that will have been available in July or August. AB 1626 funds the colleges for two years and, among other things, establishes the following: it provides just over $1.06 billion, an increase of 5 percent for the cost of living as against the $1.09 or 9.7 percent requested by the Board; maintains the equalization and incremental cost factors of AB 8; allows 2.5 percent for additional ADA, but will pay only $1100 per ADA for non-credit courses instead of the previous $1900, a compromise with the K-12 districts (called "equity"); although it will pay the full amount for mandated, non-credit courses that were already being taught in 1980-81, new ones will get only the $1100. It will not pay for recreational, public service courses (the macrame variety); it limits the number of weekly student contact hours that part time instructors can teach to present levels in those districts where part time people taught more than 28 percent of those hours; it requires the Board of Governors to adopt a system of course classification by 1 July 1982, or the CC's will not get the 5 percent inflation factor projected for 1982-83.

Legislators will continue to introduce some trailer bills to clear up details that got confused in their rush to get the budget passed by 15 June, and it will take some time to sort through the hundreds of bills they voted on in their subsequent rush to finish up before their summer recess.

Most of the Board's other business dealt with how some categorical programs should be run and paid for and is of much more interest to those who administer them. What the Feds finally do, of course, will greatly affect the way they are run and how much money they get. Not too many predictions have as yet been made as to how the Fed's actions will affect the Community Colleges.

LINGUISTIC GEMS: regarding allocations to EOPS, "It is recommended that the Board adopt the element weight and special conditions adjustments as depicted in Table 1 and the preliminary college allocations as displayed in the Appendix."

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ENGLISH COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA ECCTYC TWO YEAR COLLEGES

inside english

Vol. VIII, No. 2 | Journal of the English Council of California Two-Year Colleges | December 1981

INSIDE *inside english*

ECCTYC Looks at Writing

Good writing is a "major concern in all disciplines," assert two professors from California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. To teach good writing in all courses, teachers must design writing tasks "that elicit good written work and promote other course objectives as well."
pages 4 and 5

To learn, often one must UNlearn—as one community college instructor discovered at an NEH Summer Seminar at the University of Washington.
page 3

Need a change? How about exchanging jobs with a colleague at another California community college? If you're interested, look at the Notices column.
page 2

★

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Sacramento Scene ..... page 7

CONTROLLED COMPOSITION:

An Alternative to Grammar in the Writing Laboratory

By HELEN HEIGHTSMAN GORDON
Bakersfield College

WHEN WE first established the reading and writing labs in our Bakersfield College Learning Center, we found excellent commercial materials available for reading, vocabulary, and spelling improvement. We were not as well pleased with available materials for writing improvement, however. Most of the writing skills materials available were limited to grammar and punctuation drills. Although such drills have their uses, especially for students who repeatedly make a certain type of error, we felt the need for some kind of holistic writing practice also.

Foreign students especially need some holistic practice because many of them can do grammar drills perfectly yet are unable to write coherent papers. And some of our students have had so little writing practice that they cannot transfer the concepts from drills to their own compositions.

Giving immediate feedback is more difficult with writing practice than with reading practice, yet the writing lab should strive to make it possible. Original compositions demand more grading time than our limited staff is able to supply. Yet free writing alone does not suffice because it provides no clues for improving the writing. Beginning and remedial writers also need positive models of good writing to imitate, not just bad writing to analyze and correct in workbooks.

Controlled Compositions

We found a partial answer to our problems through the use of controlled compositions. This method is suitable for a wide range of student abilities. Able students enjoy it, and it is also effective with the insecure ones—those who are unfamiliar with English idioms, those who do not analyze well, and those who can't think of anything to say. There are also a few students it does *not* appeal to—those who think that drills are the only legitimate way to study "English" and those who dislike having to rewrite careless work. But for students who stick with it, some remarkable progress can be made in fluency and correctness.

The Method

Here's how the method works. Students copy well-written short compositions, changing each one in some meaningful way, such as from present to past, singular to plural, slang to standard English, and so on. Or they may combine selected sentences within the composition to form appositives, compound sentences, adjective clauses, adverbial clauses, etc. They learn the appropriate punctuation in context as they make these changes. In effect, they are "playing the game" as they learn the rules—learning by doing.

Basically, controlled compositions are a means of learning to write by imitation, but they are not mindless copying. The student must manipulate the passages, thoughtfully, but he or she can concentrate on just one concept at a time. Thus even the student who has repeatedly experienced failure can write a perfect paper.

Students should copy the entire passage, not just cross out and replace words. In this way they develop fluency, a sense of continuity, and proofreading skills. If students make more than three errors on one controlled composition, they should re-do at least those sentences in which the errors occur. Even better results can be obtained by re-doing the whole paper to get a perfect copy, because this task resembles revision tasks in the world of work, *i.e.* "Do it right until you get it right." However, students should not have to re-do an exercise more than once. They should move on to a more difficult assignment, such as from pronoun consistency to using various verb tenses.

Grading

Grading of controlled compositions is quick and easy. The instructor quickly becomes familiar with each exercise and can scan it in the student's presence. By merely circling errors and asking the student to explain what is missing or wrong, the instructor encourages him to edit his own work. Tutors or student aides can also be trained to grade controlled compositions with a key. In cases where more than one response may be acceptable, the grader should accept any response that makes sense.

Effectiveness of the Method

This method has limitations, of course. It should be supplemented by free writing, journal keeping, sentence combining, clustering, and original compositions. Once students have been exposed to the good writing in controlled compositions, however, their original writing improves as they draw upon the patterns and structures they have absorbed.

To test the effectiveness of controlled compositions in reducing errors and increasing fluency, a pilot course in basic writing was conducted using this method plus free writing and clustering (writing original sentences from stimulus words). As measured by essays on uniform topics at the beginning and end of the semester, students in this experimental course reduced their mechanical errors by 43 percent and increased fluency by 17 percent. A carefully matched group of students studying traditional sentence structure reduced their errors by only 15 percent and did not increase fluency at all. In fact, they wrote, on the average, 10 percent fewer words at the end of the semester than they had written at the beginning. (Further details can be found in the author's doctoral dissertation.)[1]

Applications of the Method

The applications of this method are as various as students themselves. Instructors in vocational and technical programs could select materials of special interest to their students. Instructors of students with low self-esteem can select materials from self-help books with a strong "can do" flavor.

Composition Theory

As a mode of instruction that presents an alternative to grammar and usage drills, controlled compositions make a positive contribution. Although the general public seems to believe that students' writing deficiencies can be cured by such drills, this belief flies in the face of a substantial body of research. Summarizing over fifty years of this research, Dunning and Redd[2] listed several "knowns" leading to the recommendations by the National Council of Teachers of English for teaching writing:

1. That isolated drills in usage, formal grammar, phonics, and spelling have

(Continued on Page 3)

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Notices

FACULTY EXCHANGE

I'm not sure that this situation prevails at all of our community colleges, for I did see some younger faces at ECCTYC's November conference. But as our English Department here at the College of the Sequoias has become older and more staid, primarily because of the lack of the impetus of new instructors being hired, new blood being infused, I've wondered how we could counteract some of this stagnation. One idea that I've thought about is the exchange of English instructors between California community colleges. Since several people at our recent San Francisco Conference to whom I mentioned this idea responded with enthusiam ("Yeah! why don't *you* get something going?"), I decided to use *i.e.* as a forum to see if there were enough statewide interest to encourage ECCTYC's taking on the position of clearinghouse for such exchanges.

Briefly, as I see the process, ECCTYC could function as a coordinator, I, as present secretary, probably handling most of the coordination, unless the response were overwhelming. Thus, if an instructor from Shasta or Laney would be willing to exchange her position with an interested instructor from King's River or Southwestern, she would notify ECCTYC's secretary, who, in turn, would notify both instructors that their schools had mutual exchange positions open. Then, the two individuals could contact each other and make other special arrangements, such as the exchange of houses, for a semester or a year. These are just examples, of course, and the program would certainly not discourage intra-district or other geographically close exchanges. Personally, I'd like a *complete* change of geographical scenery, if I were to be involved in such an exchange.

If there is interest in your department (and *you* are enough interest, even if your colleagues are negative), please write me and I'll bring this to the attention of the ECCTYC Board at our April meeting.

William Decker
College of the Sequoias
915 S. Mooney Blvd.
Visalia, CA 93277

LOAD STUDY COMPLETED

ECCTYC's study of English composition workloads in eighty-one California two-year colleges has been completed by Robert Mognis, chairperson of ECCTYC's Workload/Differential Committee. The study, which will be updated yearly, summarizes data gathered in spring, 1981. Items include maximum class size for transfer and remedial composition courses, maximum number of composition classes in workloads. Placement examination information is also included. The study will be summarized in a later issue of *inside english*.

If you have questions about workload or problems that you would like to bring to the attention of ECCTYC, please write to Robert Mognis, Chairperson, Literature and Language Arts Division, Modesto Junior College, Modesto, CA 95350.

MT SAC WRITERS' DAY

Speakers, Prizes, Information—all to be had at the Seventh Mt. San Antonio College Writers' Day Festival, held Saturday, 6 March 1982, from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., at the college. Prizes will be given in three divisions: Mt. SAC students, high school students in the Mt. SAC district, and general community residents. However, anyone from anywhere can attend to hear speakers like Ray Bradbury, Jack Smith (*LA Times* columnist, author of *God and Mr. Gomez*), Doris Baizley (writer for Improvisational Theater Project at the Mark Taper Forum), Thomas Thompson (author of *Serpentine*), Kathleen Spivack (poet from New England), Charles Neighbors (New York literary agent), and Bette Ross (former Mt. SAC student and author of *Song of Deborah* and *Our Special Child*).

To attend send four dollars to Evelyn Martin, English Department, Mt. San Antonio College, 1100 No. Grand Avenue, Walnut, CA 91789.

CCCC MEETS IN SF

The Conference on College Composition and Communication holds its 1982 Annual Convention 18-20 March at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in San Francisco. Its theme—"Serving Our Students, Our Public, and Our Profession"—promises a varied and interesting program. Scheduled to speak at the Thursday evening general session is Winston Weathers, creator of the writing program at the University of Tulsa and the author of poetry and short stories. Janet Emig of Rutgers University, known for her studies of students in the process of composing, will address the Thursday morning general session.

For further information write Donald C. Stewart, 1982 CCCC Program Chair, c/o NCTE, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801.

WCRA MEETS

The annual meeting of the Western College Reading Association (WCRA) will be held in San Diego, 1-4 April 1982, at the Bahia Hotel on Mission Bay. WCRA stresses learning assistance/developmental education and focuses on basic skills areas such as reading, writing, and ESL.

For registration information write or call Ms. Jan McMillan, Point Loma College, 3900 Lomaland Drive, San Diego, CA 92106, (714) 222-6474, ext. 384.

SUMMER INSTITUTE

National Endowment for the Humanities is sponsoring a Summer Institute in Writing Across the Curriculum, 27 June to 30 July 1982 at Beaver College, near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Prospective participants must apply in teams of three: two college or university instructors from the same institution—one in writing, one in another humanities discipline—and one instructor (in English, social studies, or foreign language) from a secondary institution in the same geographic area as the college or university. NEH will provide a $500.00 stipend for each participant and will pay most expenses for travel and room and board in the Beaver College dormitories. A commitment by the administration at the participant's home institution and some cost sharing are required.

For further information and applications write Dr. Elaine P. Maimon, Director, NEH National Dissemination Program for Writing in the Humanities, Beaver College, Glenside, PA 19038.

OTHER DATES

CATE Annual Convention,
12-14 February 1982,
San Francisco Hilton.

CATESOL Annual Conference,
13-15 March 1982,
San Francisco

SCTE Spring Conference,
27 March 1982,
Rio Hondo College, Whittier.

Letters

KUDOS FOR KEVIN

To the Editor:

I'd like to thank you for running Kevin Ryan's recent *inside english* piece, "Writer's Intuition" ["Teachers, Students, and Writer's Intuition," September 1981, p. 5]. I found my colleagues paying it the ultimate compliment—either reading it aloud to their students or xeroxing it as a basis for discussions in their writing classes.

I think Ryan's essay comes as close as anything I've read to having a professional writer drop into one's classroom to tell how it *really* is out there (a great part of the appeal of Roger Garrison, both in person and in print, as many of us already know, as well as of Dawe and Dornan in their excellent book *One-to-One*).

I like Ryan's daring, his leap of faith that trusts even the beginning writer to create an opening, cast a paragraph, or frame a conclusion not "by the book"—because, finally, there *is* no book—but in response to the inner voice that speaks as clearly, in its own way, to a remedial composition student as it ever did to the epic poets. And I find something comforting in that.

TAYLOR KLOSE
Moorpark College

Dear Editor:

I love Kevin Ryan! He's out in that creative, vulnerable, and essential field of intuition where we all belong and meet in meaningful and most of all surprising, enlightening ways. More inspirational articles by Kevin, please!

HELENA HALE
Santa Barbara City College

A NEEDED LAUGH

Dear Editor:

I thought other English instructors might be as amused as I was by the malapropisms my students have used. Over the years I've collected them from student writing and speech. I list them below in the hope that they will provide other bleary-eyed English teachers with a few laughs.

—"Publishers, Editors, English Teachers and Other Linguistic Authoritarians
—"The Future of Democracy: A Swine Song"
—escrew company
—the Dupontic plague
—"I know. My paper is full of run-offs."
—The people came in groves.
—I don't know a cinnamon for . . . .
—Department of Labors
—Thank you for your corporation.
—gland of plenty

Sincerely,
BETTY COON
Contra Costa College/Vista College

UNLEARNING COMP

ΠΑΡΑΓΡΑΦΟΙ: Paragraphs

By RICHARD TRACEY
Cerritos College

With Barbara Bilson (Santa Monica College; *i.e.* editor) Joe Fitschen (Lassen College [Hi, Joe!]), and nine other college English instructors from around the country, I attended William Irmscher's NEH Summer Seminar, "Contrastive Analysis of Various Approaches to Teaching Composition," in Seattle last summer. During our last week Barbara and I made a sort of pact that we wouldn't return to our home campuses this fall to throw any NEH weight around or to force our summer's work into every conversation, no matter how remedial we knew it to be. As I recall, this also included Barbara's commitment not to fill up the pages of *i.e.* with our seminar—and her extracting instead a commitment from me to fill up at least a column with it. So, to be brief, I can now see from my hindsightful vantage point that over the summer the unlearning was just as important as the learning we did.

I started my application for the seminar by telling Irmscher—who, as he does still, directed the Freshman English Program at the University of Washington when I was an undergraduate there—that his TA's had never taught me any composition and that I had to teach it to myself. I finished my application with how I'd finally learned comp from the handbooks and rhetorics I was assigned to teach from as a new part-timer with a fresh graduate literature degree. Even so, Irmscher invited me to join his seminar—his second chance . . . or mine?

Clearly mine.

¶

In a short eight weeks I unlearned all that comp and relearned writing. The best instance of this is our work on the paragraph.

No wonder Irmscher's TAs didn't teach the outlined/topic-sentenced monolith I've been teaching: it was Irmscher, as editor of *College Composition and Communication*, who published (1965-66) Francis Christensen's "Generative Rhetoric of the Paragraph," Alton L. Becker's "Tagmemic Approach to Paragraph Analysis," and Paul C. Rodgers, Jr's "Discourse-Centered Rhetoric of the Paragraph." These Irmscher later published with comments/rebuttals in *The Sentence and the Paragraph* (NCTE, n.d.), and it was in this booklet that we studied what he calls "the first serious reconsideration of paragraph structure in almost a century." This reconsideration began when I was a high school sophomore and still hasn't filtered down into most college classrooms as I begin my sixth year as a college writing instructor.

In short, modern rhetoric, as stated in these and other articles, views the paragraph, or more precisely the indention of a paragraph, as simply the punctuation stronger than the period. We indent, say modern rhetoricians, not to start a paragraph, but to finish one. In other words we paragraph after we have descended into some intuited, appropriate level of particularity on a given topic; the white space that fills out the line and begins the next one puts the fullest stop on that topic; and the next sentence ascends to an abruptly new level of generality. A paragraph, therefore, is anything between two indentions.

It's the paragraph bloc that modern rhetoric views as the major constituent unit of the essay. A paragraph bloc is a group of paragraphs collectively developing a major thought within an essay; it corresponds to the *thinking* in the essay but not necessarily to the paragraphing. Thus, paragraph blocking punctuates the essay just as paragraphing punctuates the paragraph bloc.

Such views are nothing new. After all, the παραγραφοι was originally a symbol (¶, a decorative π as an abbreviation) literally "written beside" (*para graphos*) any line which contained a break in the thinking. But the comp paragraph that I unlearned IS new—not Classical Greek, but Victorian Scots! [See Paul C. Rodgers, Jr., "Alexander Bain and the Rise of the Organic Paragraph," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 51 (Dec. 1965). 399-408.]

If these ideas intrigue you, consult *The Sentence and the Paragraph*, cited above, or read Chapter 9, "Teaching Structure," in William Irmscher's *Teaching Expository Writing* (Holt, 1979). Or read a sampling of modern American prose, anything from *New West* to *The New Yorker* to *The New Republic*. You'll find paragraph blocs, you'll find paragraphing as punctuation, and you'll find no more than half the paragraphs, says Irmscher, with even a loosely defined topic sentence. You'll find writing but you won't find comp.

It is pure irony that nowadays we feel so liberated by our descriptive grammars when we are so shackled by our prescriptive rhetorics.

¶

There, that's a little of what we learned and unlearned in one of our eight weeks in the seminar. And even if these ideas don't intrigue you, I still urge you to apply next spring for a 1982 NEH Summer Seminar. This is the single most important thing I learned last summer: These seminars exist (and will continue to, even under Reagan's cutbacks), and you should apply to one. From the ninety-six applicants to our seminar, we three Californians represented 25 percent of those accepted and 75 percent of the two-year college instructors accepted. (No four-year college instructors from California were accepted.)

I'll gladly help you with your application.

What I Did Last Summer

On this assignment you were required
to write a paper describing an event
of some significance to you. The essay
is unified by theme but rambles
just a bit when you describe
your guilt at having lived. Verb tenses
still are haphazard; you should have said
Thai pirates *raped* and *killed*. Tense endings
are important, and omissions cause
the reader some confusion. I know
prepositions are maddening to control,
but that Malaysian patrol boat sliced
into our boat, or *through*, not *at*.
Don't jump about so much in time;
the past perfect could have been used
to good effect, as in the sentence,
When the women were raped, we wished
we *had fought* to save them. Also,
I was a bit confused by your handling
of numbers. Were you the one survivor
of the twenty-one? Were forty on the boat
before or after the women were raped?
Or did twenty-one out of forty live?
Confusion about numbers wouldn't occur
if they were rescued from that tangle
of sentences. With these exceptions, the essay
seems just fine. Correct your errors
before going on to chapter nine.

DICK ALBERT
Chabot College

CONTROLLED COMP

(Continued from Page 1)

little value. These skills are best learned in a context.

2. That most students learn to write and read by performing real tasks: writing letters, notices, stories, reports for a class audience, etc.
3. That drills may be useful following diagnosis of weakness in a specific area, but not as a substitute for whole writing tasks.
4. That students need help *during* the writing process.
5. That sentence building is more productive than analysis or labeling.

Copying as a means of learning style was a much-utilized method in the eighteenth century, and many practitioners are now recommending its revival. William Gruber[3] reported amazing improvement in his students' writing through the "servile copying" of the style of Mark Twain and others. Daniel Fader[4] also advocated copying in his 1976 book *The New Hooked on Books*. He told an anecdote about a youth in a detention facility who had "nothing to write about" for his journal, but when allowed to copy *Time* magazine for six weeks, improved not only his writing but his participation in social studies classes. Edward Corbett and Barrett Mandel[5] suggest that copying model passages allows students the experience of producing mature prose without consciously conceptualizing it first—in other words,

bypassing the analytical left hemisphere of the brain and experiencing insightfully with the right hemisphere.

Commercial Materials

For those instructors who do not have time to write and select their own controlled composition materials, some commercial materials are available. A pioneer in the field is Kunz and Viscount's *Write Me a Ream* (Columbia University: Teacher's College Press), an inexpensive supplemental set of exercises designed for adult education. More recent works are two from Holt, Rinehart and Winston: Friedman and MacKillop's *The Copy Book* (1980) and Gordon's *From Copying to Creating* (1981). Friedmann has extensive exercises and suggestions for original compositions suitable for college students or advanced students of English as a second language. Gordon includes some sentence-combining and a handbook for correcting errors, in addition to sixty controlled compositions suitable for college developmental students, ESL, or adult education. Two books from Language Innovations, Inc., of New York are designed especially for ESL students: *Ten Steps*, by Brookes and Withrow, provides sixty-one model passages for beginning and intermediate ESL students, and *Twenty-six Steps*, by Kunz, fifty-three passages for intermediate and advanced ESL students.

Although controlled compositions will not render unnecessary the writing of original compositions, they do provide a useful kind of writing practice. Because they can be graded in a minute or two, they free the instructor to spend more time on the students' original compositions. They are sound in theory because they provide positive models, immediate feedback, and opportunities for repeated successful experiences.

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MAKING BETTER BEGINNINGS:
Generating Effective Writing Assignments . . .
ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

By ANDREW MOSS and CAROL HOLDER
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

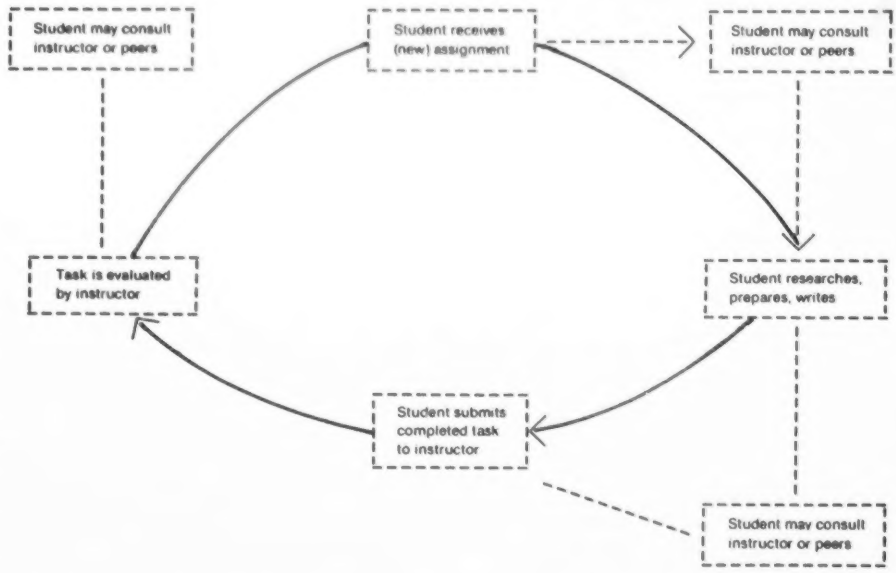
STUDENT writing has become a major concern in all disciplines at community colleges as well as at secondary schools and four-year colleges across the country. Faculty in political science and biology, nursing and art history, are being asked to assign more writing, to grade more writing, and to encourage the composing processes of their students. Like their colleagues teaching composition, these teachers face the challenge of developing thoughtful, well-conceived assignments in order to stimulate their students to write and to want to write well.

A major part of a cross-curricular writing seminar which we conducted at Cal State San Bernardino in September, 1980, dealt with this challenge: designing writing assignments that elicit good written work and promote other course objectives as well. The preliminary results of the seminar, attended by faculty from Riverside City College, San Bernardino Valley College, and Cal State San Bernardino, have indicated to us the value of emphasizing the very beginning of the teacher's planning process: the conception of the assignment itself.

In one of our sessions on assignment design, we presented contrasting models of assigning writing (Figs. 1 and 2). The traditional model (Fig. 1) represents a pattern of learning activities which still characterizes classes in many fields. The students are assigned a written project of some kind (a book critique, a research paper, a lab report), and they go off to undertake the project alone (as indicated at the right-hand side of the cycle). Some students may consult with classmates or with the instructor, but most work entirely on their own. After false starts, second guesses, and last-minute revisions, they turn the work in (as represented at the bottom of the cycle) and await the teacher's judgment—often only a few brief comments in the margins or at the bottom of the page.

There is nothing wrong with this process except that when students enter their careers they will often work collaboratively, exchanging drafts of memos or reports, exploring ideas in formal meetings or over cups of coffee at a break. The collaborative process, the team effort, operates in medical research laboratories, in accounting firms, and in public relations agencies; in the give and take of conversation, ideas can be quickly tested and modified.

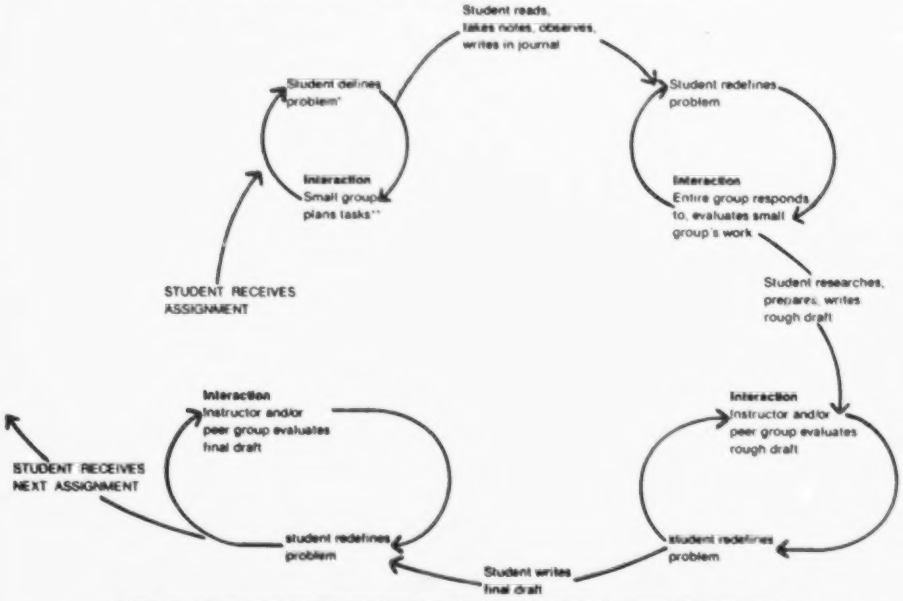
Figure 1: Cycle of a Student's Learning Activities — A Traditional Model


Student may consult instructor or peers
Student receives (new) assignment
Student may consult instructor or peers
Task is evaluated by instructor
Student researches, prepares, writes
Student submits completed task to instructor
Student may consult instructor or peers

The activities represented in the expanded model (Fig. 2) simulate the kinds of collaboration students will encounter in their professional lives. Though the model is only an abstraction and presents just one possible sequence, it does incorporate a full range of language activities from prewriting through evaluation. Owing much to the work of such researchers and teachers as James Britton, James Moffett, and Thom Hawkins, the model stresses the use of small and large groups to help students exchange ideas and define the rhetorical tasks facing them in any particular assignment.

As indicated by the small circle at the upper left-hand corner of the model, the students can meet in small groups first to discuss their writing tasks, then strike out individually to work on their own sub-tasks. When they regroup they may present their findings (as a small team) to the entire class, and the results of this interaction can lead back to individual work: the writing of their rough drafts (as noted at the right-hand side of the model). Thus students have opportunities to read about, discuss, and listen to ideas pertinent to the assignment problem before they begin writing their first drafts. This first draft, then, comes out of a much richer verbal environment than does the first draft in the classs based on the traditional model. The two circles at the bottom of the cycle indicate the opportunities for peer- and instructor-evaluation of the rough and final drafts, allowing for a thorough and engaging process from the moment the task is given to the time that the final written product is evaluated and returned to the student.

Figure 2: Cycle of a Student's Learning Activities — Expanded Model



*Defining the problem involves identifying and handling all of the issues related to the development of a written product: audience, purpose, thesis, mode of discourse, choice of evidence and arguments, order of presentation, word choice, etc.

**e.g., debates, group presentations and reports.

THE EXPANDED MODEL: AN EXAMPLE

To illustrate how the model can operate in many different disciplines, we presented at the San Bernardino seminar examples of assignments in psychology, literature, and accounting; all the assignments required collaboration. The writing task below was developed by Cal Poly Accounting Professor Alan Senn and Carol Holder for use in a team-taught writing class for accounting majors; we include with the assignment a description of possible activities that correspond to the expanded model described above.

THE STUDENTS ARE GIVEN THE FOLLOWING ASSIGNMENT:

Assume that you and a partner have an accounting firm. You have just accepted a new client, Gordon Blue, who has provided the following information during several conferences:

Blue is 58 years old and has a wife and three grown children. He has been the maitre d' at a prominent restaurant for twenty years and is now opening his own place.

Blue has posed several questions he wants you and your partner to answer:

GENERATING EFFECTIVE WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Across the Curriculum

1. What form of business enterprises should he set up for his new restaurant? What are the relative advantages and disadvantages of each form?
2. Should he lease or buy the equipment? What are critical factors he should consider in making his decision?
3. What kind of retirement plans are available for self-employed persons? He has heard about IRA and Keogh, but does not understand them.
4. Can and should he sell his home to raise capital needed in the business? He has heard that he can exclude profit of up to $100,000 in a sale of his residence.
5. Can he take a Nile cruise and claim some portion of the costs as business expenses as he plans to attend professional seminars en route? How might he make arrangements to legitimize deductions?
6. How can he give some of his wealth to his children effective at his death without creating for them a heavy tax liability?
7. How might he best take advantage of income averaging provisions of Federal tax law if his new business prospers as expected?
8. What does *internal control* of a business mean? What does it involve, for restaurants especially, and why is it important?

You and your partner have decided to take four questions apiece and draft responses for each question area. (You may prepare responses to *any* four of the questions.) In planning and writing these four reports, remember that Gordon Blue has little knowledge of accounting. He needs specific, concise responses written in no-technical language.

STUDENTS MEET IN SMALL GROUPS:

In addition to preparing written responses to four of the eight question areas, the students, working in teams, prepare to present an oral response to just one question. (The oral presentations will be made prior to the due date for the rough drafts of the written reports.)

On the day the teacher hands out the assignment, she divides the class into eight teams, assigning one question area to each team. These then meet to plan their presentation. In small group discussion, the students consider the question before them carefully, discuss what they know to be relevant advice, identify sub-questions that will need further research, plan their oral presentation, and divide among themselves the tasks of researching information and presenting the response.

STUDENTS READ, WRITE, OBSERVE, ETC.:

On their own, the students work on their assignment from the small group, preparing to give an oral response to one area of one question. Also, students make preliminary decisions about the four questions for their written report.

ENTIRE GROUP RESPONDS TO, EVALUATES, SMALL GROUPS' WORK:

At the designated class meeting, each team gives, in an oral report, advice pertinent to one question area. The teacher and class act first as Gordon Blue, asking for clarification and raising further questions, and then as accounting experts, commenting on the accuracy and completeness of the advice.

STUDENTS RESEARCH; PREPARE, WRITE ROUGH DRAFTS, INSTRUCTOR AND PEERS EVALUATE ROUGH DRAFTS

Rough drafts are read aloud, projected, or exchanged so that students comment on and question each other's work; all receive some feedback from more than one person on what they've written. The advantage of using an opaque projector is that students can hear spontaneous reactions to their work from other students and from the instructor. All can learn simultaneously from each other's successes and shortcomings (even if there are few comments).

STUDENTS WRITE FINAL DRAFTS; INSTRUCTOR AND PEERS EVALUATE FINAL DRAFTS

Final drafts can be shared and evaluated as were the rough drafts. Following peer evaluation, the instructor comments on and grades the final drafts. These comments may be written, taped, or presented in a conference with the student. The comments should reflect the student's progress and suggest areas for improvement.

FACULTY USE OF THE EXPANDED MODEL

The activities of this expanded model may seem to require too much valuable classroom time, time which a sociology or biology professor would much rather spend in lecture or in discussion of readings. Yet the response from the faculty participating in the San Bernardino seminar clearly indicated to us that the advantages of introducing group effort far outweigh the problems created by the time requirement. In a two-day retreat held at the end of January, we asked the faculty participants to describe the experiments they had undertaken in assigning writing since the September seminar. We discovered that the instructors used the model in different ways, applying it to the unique needs of their own classes.

A community college professor, for example, applied the first part of the model in her physics class. She had small groups of students work together to help one another develop what she calls "Directed Summaries," reports on the content and implications of current research articles in various fields. As she explained to us, the group activities help the students "experience insights into other people's problems, other people's strengths." The students worked with one another to clarify problems

("Does this article report research?" "What did the researchers find?" "What's the significance of these findings?") and exchange resources and ideas.

In a Psychology of Women class, the professor used the later steps in the cycle, asking students to meet in small groups to evaluate one another's papers. The class members were writing critical summaries of articles on a wide range of topics ("the healthy woman," "the double standard of aging," "the male sex role"), and the small-group interactions helped them to exchange ideas and points of view and to see examples of good summaries written by peers. The professor told us that this small-group activity also helped make the class more cohesive.

Another interesting experiment applied this model to an Introduction to Politics class. The professor wanted to obtain samples of his students' writing early in the quarter, so as to identify the weakest students and provide assistance for them (either his own or through the Learning Center). In order to obtain a diagnostic writing sample, he devised a political simulation that required writing as part of the activities. In his first simulation, which he conducted last fall, the students assumed roles in the then-current Iranian hostage crisis.

Small groups of students (four or five students in a group) each became responsible for representing a different party in the conflict: the Ayatollah Khomeini, President Bani-Sadr, the United States Government, the Soviet Union, the hostages. Students in each group wrote (individually) brief descriptions of their role; some of the students wrote in the first person, as if they themselves were Bani-Sadr or the President of the United States. Other simply described the roles. The students then exchanged these short position statements among all of the class members, a step which allowed them to view and reflect upon one another's positions. Each group then presented its position and a discussion followed. After a few minutes, the confrontation began, stalemates arose, and positions polarized.

The professor then ended the simulation and collected the statements. Thus he acquired the diagnostic samples that he sought (he identified students that he subsequently sent to the Learning Center); the students saw how, through writing, they could formulate and communicate a point of view; and they gained a live, intense exposure to the dynamics of political behavior.

Though a model such as the one we have described will find varying applications in different classes and disciplines, instructors of any course will find that it helps involve students actively in the learning process. The collaborative activities increase the students' responsibility for their own learning and still leave an indispensable role for the instructor: as a guide through an unfamiliar field of knowledge, as a facilitator of activities, as an evaluator of ongoing and finished work. Certainly if writing is a mode of learning, and if it is (as Moffett and others have suggested) integrally connected to talking, reading, and listening, then the elaboration of assignment activities can make a class more stimulating and the students' writing much stronger.

Conferences

There's another conference this weekend—
For English teachers, this one.
A chance to reaffirm that we know what we're doing
And why.

Remember now, we tell ourselves,
Remember, and repeat after we:
It's "i" before "e" except after
See the main idea of the
Selection of courses for college transfers is
Critical essays are too difficult for
Most students love conferences if
Their teachers miss a day of class.

And what is the use of it all?
All this movement from conference to
Lecture to mealtime and repeat?
Is it dysfunctional, this transactional
Attempt to structure our souls?
You might as well ask, no—
I might as well ask—
The use of preparing for that 10 o'clock class
That never remembers their books.
I might as well ask why the years
Of preparation for hostile adults
Who see me as another chance to fail.
I might as well ask why this life I've chosen.
I can't ask, because, sometimes,
The answers don't make sense.
But my life does. Oh, yes, it does.

And to see that same belief
In someone else's eyes
At yet another conference
Helps.

LLOYD SHERMAN
City College of San Francisco

—REviews—

"REviews" features discussions of books and media programs that are suitable for use in writing or literature courses or that have special interest for teachers of English. These reviews should be from 100 to 500 words and should evaluate the book's or program's effective use in a classroom, in a learning resource center, by an individual student, or by the instructor. Include with the review all pertinent publication information, the number of pages or length of running time, and the cost.

A BOOK FOR ALL WRITERS

By GERTRUDE S. FUJII
Los Angeles Valley College

If you have ever had the nagging compulsion to write that short story or that great novel burning within you but have not taken the urge really seriously because you did not know where to start, take heart. Your days of procrastination are over.

Approaches to Professional Writing, a small volume by Leslie P. Boston, takes you from the beginning idea to the finished product to publication. Boston, a professor of creative writing at Los Angeles Valley College and at the University of California, Los Angeles Extension Writers' Program, has had ample opportunities to observe all the pitfalls and self-doubts that ensnare novice writers. These he divides into two types: the first, he dismisses as the amateur who, among other things, "seeks to characterize by writing that a character is a Robert Redford or a Bo Derek type"; the second, the beginning writer, he characterizes, in part, as "anyone who has vague but recurring stirrings that expressions can best be found with words on paper . . . anyone who says secretly or proudly: 'Nothing could be nobler—or more rewarding than a literary career.'" It is to these beginning writers, whom Boston describes in thirteen "anyone who" statements, that this superbly organized book is written.

The volume—a short 157 pages for all the information it contains—is divided into five main parts: Finding Yourself as a Writer, Learning and Practicing the Craft, Getting Your Writing Started, Developing Your Writing, and Completing the Process. Each part is further divided into chapters, seventeen in all, each of which ends with from one to twelve assignments and suggestions. These vary from the practical—"Pick a subject in which you are interested and begin to build a permanent bibliography on your way to becoming an expert by writing several articles that could lead to a book or two"— from Chapter 10, Part III, to the succinct—"Do it"—ending the chapter "Selling Your Writing" in Part V.

The prose is clear and sparse; the organization is easy to follow, with helpful subsections in each chapter. For example, the chapter on "Development of Fiction and Drama" has divisions on theme, point of view, character, and plot, each of which is further subdivided for clarity of discussion.

While the book can be used by any beginning writer, its primary value is as a textbook for creative writing courses. The assignments and activities at the end of each chapter are based upon the concepts presented in that chapter and can be easily adapted by instructors to meet the needs of their own situations and students. Writers using the book on their own are afforded a wide choice of options in their writing. Also of use is the chapter "Selected References," which lists important source materials in thirteen categories, including Careers in Writing, Writers on Writing, Research, Marketing, and Self-Publishing.

For the beginning writer, in or out of a classroom, Boston has written a book that not only answers the need for technical explications, but also provides the incentive to express in written form that haunting compulsion common to every imaginative user of words.

Leslie P. Boston. *Approaches to Professional Writing*. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 1981. 157 pages, plus references and index.

BICYCLING, THE INNER EAR, AND WRITING THEORY

By DON K. PIERSTORFF
Orange Coast College
Long Beach City College

In order to learn to ride a bicycle, one must have a sense of balance. One's sense of balance depends on the movements of a fluid located in the inner ear. The question is this: How much must one know about the fluid of the inner ear in order to learn to ride a bicycle? An allied question is this: If a bicycle coach—your mother, let's say—noted that you fell off the bicycle more times than you stayed on the bicycle during the first two days of bicycle training, would that bicycle coach suspect you had trouble with your inner ear or would that bicycle coach suspect you had lack of practice riding a bicycle? It comes down to this question: How much theory about the workings of your inner ear does your bicycle coach need in order to be a good bicycle coach? For that matter, how much recently published theory about generative rhetoric does an English composition teacher need to know in order to be a good English composition teacher? This question should have been more closely considered by the authors of *Four Worlds of Writing*, whose text is sure to deafen any beginning writers by a cacophony of theory.

Consider for a moment the word *theory*. It comes from the Greek *theoros*, spectator, from *theasthai*, to observe, from *thea*, a viewing. It is etymologically close to *theater*. Its dictionary meanings range from "a systematic statement of principles involved" to "popularly, a mere conjecture, or guess." The *Dictionary of Behavioral Science* says, "Whichever way scientists proceed, a theory is a system of hypothetical statements concerning a certain area of scientific inquiry." Now look at this statement

from a new English composition textbook, and note the shift from *theory* to *premise*:

"We set out to build *Four Worlds of Writing* around the composing process, basing our approach on premises derived from rhetorical theory of the last decade:

- —that writing is a unique way of learning
- —that meaningful writing grows from a writer's own pressing questions
- —that the composing process is a series of stages that can vary in sequence and are often recursive, even though they must be ordered in certain ways in a text
- —that primary to meaningful writing is the discovery and communication of a significant focus to which aims and modes are subordinate
- —that specific skills such as sentence-combining, paragraph building, and conventions of usage are best developed within the framework of the whole composing process

Throughout, we have merged theory with the practical experience of college instructors who have developed, tested, and refined that theory in their classrooms" (p. xv).

A premise is an assumption, not a fact; the authors of this paragraph have moved from ten years of rhetorical theory to assumptions based on that theory to merging theory—not assumptions, this time—with practical experience of instructors who have in turn modified the theory itself. That's the kind of stuff that'll knock the socks off any brand-new MA in English. Or anybody else who does not remember that ". . . about Forty Years ago, certain Persons went up to *Laputa*, either upon Business or Diversion; and after five Months Continuance, came back with a very little Smattering in Mathematicks, but full of Volatile Spirits acquired in that Airy Region."

And those who do remember Laputa also know that the premises set forth in the Preface to *Four Worlds of Writing* are in fact practical statements recast in educationalisitic jargon. In ordinary English, they might look like this:

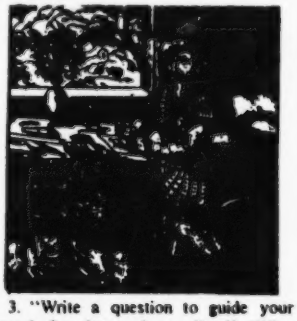
- —Writing makes learning easier.
- —Meaningful writing answers meaningful questions.
- —Writing should make sense.
- —Writing should be about something.
- —Writing can be learned.

A reason that *The Elements of Style* has been around since 1935 is that it contains clear advice, simply put. How we got to the notion that teaching writing comes before teaching reading and how we got to the notion that writing is a pseudo-scientific endeavor involving a generator mystify me. Once "generative rhetoric" is seen as partly a misunderstanding of current theories in linguistics, which is illustrated by some modern rhetoricians' mishandling linguistic terminology,[1] one can see how some modern theorists obscure even their own thinking. But why some English composition teachers are beginning to talk blithely and exclusively about things like *connexity, mental modes, phatic communion*, and *T-units* should be of more concern to their mature colleagues. In almost every case, if a student does not know how to write, that is not a theoretical learning problem; that is a teaching challenge. And in almost every case, if a kid can't ride a bicycle, there's nothing wrong with his ears.

Textbooks are not crutches; they are an integral part of teaching composition. Yet the authors of *Four Worlds of Writing* word their assignments to read like government memos. Here are some examples from page 25; the comments in parentheses are mine:

1. "Identify a place that you wish to investigate to find its impact on you." (Do these university professors of English mean *impact*—or do they mean *effect*?)

2. "Express the aspects of the place that challenge your values or exceed your expectations." (Do they mean "Express the aspects that challenge your values or exceed your expectations of the place," or is this a clever example of the "deep structure dangling modifier" sans transformation? And if we disregard the omnipresent burp, how does one "express an aspect"?)



3. "Write a question to guide your search for that understanding." (*What* understanding?)

4. "Seek comments on your starting point from your teacher or classmates or both." (This imperative is reminiscent of the argument for communal living during the 1960's: If you were close to them, your classmates and your teachers were easier to start from. Something like that.)

The stuff above is strong evidence that the authors of this textbook are not—as a group, anyway—clear writers. I am currently teaching ninety-two freshmen English students. It would take me months and months to explain page 25 of *Four Worlds of Writing* to them. That's one of the problems with junior college students. They want clarity.

As a matter of fact, the assignments throughout the book are poorly worded. Here's one from page 122: "When you develop your paper, your introduction

(Continued on Page 8)

President's Message

Must the Battle for Finances . . . . . Become the War for Survival

In September and October of 1981, we were once again treated to an unflattering view of our legislators as they insanely scrambled to produce a redistricting plan that would insure the re-election hopes of incumbents of the party in control and jeopardize the seats of the minority party. The State Capitol became a veritable battleground for the waging of a war to insure political survival. Many of us clucked our tongues, averted our eyes, and attempted to pretend that such seemingly childish behavior was not really occurring among the supposedly educated persons elected to represent us and safeguard our interests. Perhaps we should not too lightly dismiss this spectacle, but should scrutinize it carefully with an eye to insuring that such activity does not occur on our own campuses.

All of us read. All of us know the unhealthy financial status of our state government. All of us are aware that the bulk of our financing is provided by the state. Already we have felt the pinch of reduced financial support, and we know that worse times are yet to follow. We are neither more nor less human than our legislators. How will we react when the battle for finances becomes the war for professional survival? If we emulate our legislators, the powerful will become more powerful, and the weaker will be cast out: large, popular programs will survive, and smaller but necessary programs will be eliminated. We will move another giant step in the direction of providing only occupationally directed courses to a student enrollment desperately in need of the broadening influence of exposure to a well-balanced, academic liberal arts program.

Before it is too late, we need learn that "the enemy" is without, not within. As dedicated educators, we are all concerned with providing quality education to students. We cannot do so if we fight for crumbs among ourselves—one program against another, one department against another, one professional organization against another. Only by banding together can we hope to insure an overall educational experience of some quality for all our students. Traditional rivalries between disciplines, personal animosities, conflicting philosophies must be set aside if we are to achieve anything for our students, those persons for whom we all profess a total commitment.

Let us learn from the redistricting debacle. Animosity, distrust, and fear are the outcomes of infighting. Education cannot exist in such an atmosphere. Our only *real* chance for *real* survival is to set aside personal and professional jealousies in order to present a unified voice. The cooperation of colleagues, departments, and programs is the one way we have left to insure adequate funding, and thereby to insure quality education.

JIM CAGNACCI
City College of San Francisco

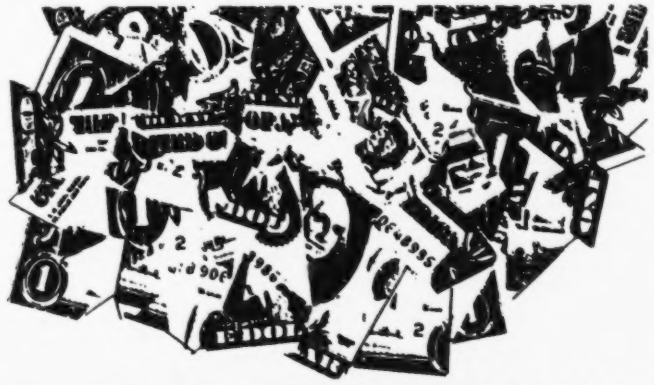
As The Money Game Continues ——— $ACRAMENTO $CENE ———

By GORDON TAYLOR
Yuba College

It is reported that high school students' scores are beginning to rise, that the prime rate is beginning to drop, and that the number of people at the poverty level is rising. Is there, perhaps, a correlation? Post hoc, ergo propter hoc.

The legislature is out until January, unless Governor Brown calls a special session to deal with the State's projected budgetary deficit (some say crisis). Ah, ha—he just did! Mostly, people in Sacramento are dealing with keeping things going and trying to forecast how much money we will (mostly not) have.

For the present fiscal year (1981-82), the Governor has ruled that the State's agencies reduce their budget by 2 percent. The University of California (UC) and the California State University and Colleges (CSUC) are in something of a bind: since their schools have begun their fall terms, their expenses are set, and they can cut them only in the spring terms, an effective reduction of 4 percent. They have, roughly speaking, two choices: to limit the number of students and reduce their staff or to find more money. At the moment, the sources of any money are mysterious. Most people in the system resist tuition for the traditional reasons, and the Governor is resisting raising taxes, no doubt for political reasons. The drama increases; tune in later for more details.



However, Governor Brown's budget ruling does not apply to local agencies: these only receive aid from the State. UC and CSUC are not happy with this arrangement. They say that it is unfair that they must cut back while the community colleges need not. But the legislature does not set the CC's budgets, only the amount of aid the various districts will receive. Also, this year, under AB 1369, if any districts are lucky enough to have their property taxes bring in additional money, it will be used to reduce the deficit of 1980-81. There is already pressure to change these arrangements as early as next year. Watch for new bills on the matter.

Some CC districts are, however, already in trouble. Barstow had to borrow money from the county to pay current expenses and then borrow from the State to pay the county. The State currently is borrowing $1 billion in the marketplace to meet current expenses of the school districts. Many districts have already spent more than the amount tax payments would normally produce this time of year.

AB 1369 (Hughes, L.A.) was a trailer bill to clean up details in the basic CC finance bill, AB 1626 (Hughes). Perhaps its most important provision is to limit the average growth of the CC's to 2.5 percent. It will allow some colleges 11 percent and others zero, with the remaining schools falling somewhere in between. The trouble is that enrollment throughout the State seems greater than that: 5 percent last year (1980-81), and the CC Chancellor's Office projects 9 percent this year. To compensate, schools are eliminating some courses, filling current classes to their maximum, and hiring part-time rather than full-time teachers. Again, the drama increases.

Other provisions of the trailer bill: It allows governing boards of the CC's to permit student members to participate more in the board's business except for matters of personnel and collective bargaining; it reclassifies some mandated non-credit courses and pays for them at the same rate as credit courses.

And under AB 1149 (Bates, Oakland), another new bill, districts appear to be seriously considering flexible calendars. The bill allows the schools to use up to fifteen days of the mandated number to develop the staff and to improve the instruction.

As most of us no doubt know by this time, President Reagan's administration is reducing the amount of money it will send to the nation's schools. California, it is reported, will receive about $1 billion less than previously, but the reports do not say how much we will still get. One of Mr. Reagan's theories was that we would still get the same value for the smaller amount of money since our overhead would not be so high: fewer bureaucrats, watchdogs, records to pay for, that sort of thing. School people say that the State's budget will lose about $310 million. Apparently the other $690 million will be taken from other budgets. The Los Angeles School District, for example, will get around $7 to $9 million for the twenty-nine programs that the Feds paid for. Last year, it received $14 million for its integration program alone; but if L.A. does not have to bus its students, it will save more than three times the fourteen million. Will wonders never cease!

The College Board now reports that SAT scores in the United States are changing for the better. It actually anticipates a rise. It is said that students are once again becoming serious, that the schools are again expecting their students to do some work, and that the populace is expecting the schools to teach. Whatever the cause, maybe we will see the students and the system improving. Careful, though; we still have a great deal of work to do.

Whatever the case, we can expect some interesting things as there is a lot of momentum already in the system and in the public: John Coons, a professor of law at UC, is collecting signatures (554,000 required) to get the issue of a voucher system put on next year's ballot. Critics of the public school system say that it is a monopoly that needs some competition to make it shape up; critics of the voucher system say that it will ruin the public school system. Do these critics secretly suspect that the public system cannot stand the competition?

☆ ☆ ☆

With its usual flair and panache, the State's Board of Education has turned bilingual education into a full-blown political issue. If one sees that the bilingual system does not work, one is racially biased. If one favors bilingual education, one is trying to split the country into conflicting ethnic groups as is the case with Canada and Quebec. Apparently, the student's reason for existing is to provide some boards and bureaucrats something to play with. Ah, yes! The joys of public life! But then the whole public system, these days, is shot through with political issues of one sort or another, to be clearly distinguished from educational issues. The students should have the opportunity to learn what is educationally appropriate without regard to those subjects' political implications.

Some developments on statewide standards: Because the Legislature resists paying for remedial courses,

(Continued on Page 8)

WRITING THEORY

(Continued on Page 6)

and conclusion, your choice of examples and diction, all contribute to building the image you wish the reader to accept." That's what happens when a committee writes a sentence. Here is a sentence from page 185: "Constructively criticizing a paper on issues written in the persuasive aim for a specific audience and in one of four modes may seem to require a reader to juggle an impossible

number of considerations." You ain't kiddin' it does. Here's a bumpersticker message from page 223: "Once you have discovered it, you must form your insight into a focus." Meditation intrudes on premises and theories here.

Now look at *Four Worlds of Writing's* definition of *style*, "Style is another name for the results of a series of choices you have made in selecting words and ways of arranging them in sentences and paragraphs," and compare it with William Zinsser's definition of *style*, "Style is organic to the person doing the writing, as much a part of him as his hair, or, if he is bald, his lack of it. Trying to add style is like adding a toupee."[2] Don't bother for the moment to agree with Zinsser; notice *how* he said what he said—with style. (Ahhh, the difference between beluga caviar and salmon eggs!)

It isn't bad enough that the assignments are unclear and that the sentences are murky in *Four Worlds of Writing*. Even words themselves don't get a fair shake. Here are selected slights, taken from pages 403-16: "GERUND: An *ing* form of the verb that is used primarily as a noun." So far, so good. But here is the sentence that the authors decided to use for illumination: "Curling is a popular sport in cold, icy climates." *Curling*, my colleagues, is the name of a game. The word *curling* is a distant cousin of a verb, not an *ing* form of a verb. See any dictionary of the English language published after 1754.

In this book for freshmen, many of them studying writing seriously for the first time in their lives, here is what is said about the word *synonym*: "A word that has the same, or almost the same, meaning as another. Examples: *Fiery* is a synonym for *burning*; *damp*, for *moist*; *incredible*, for *unbelievable*; *peak*, for *pinnacle*; *start*, for *originate*; *book*, for *tome*" (p. 415). That's it for synonyms in *Four Worlds of Writing*. Here are some sentences which were "generated" based on that book's definition:

1. "I had to hang up the phone because my cookies were fiery."
2. "I love your chocolate cakes, Mother, because they're always damp."
3. "*Moby Dick* is unbelievable."
4. "My car doesn't originate in cold weather."
5. "John's wife destroyed his little black tome."

Given the information above, all of these sentences are fine.

And for all its fine theory, *Four Worlds of Writing* will not help teachers teach students how to write better. For all their fine statements about the composing process, these four authors have not composed a readable text which itself demonstrates good, clear writing. Good theory is one thing; good practice is another. And in this book, unfortunately, the twain do not meet.

Janice M. Lauer, Gene Montague, Andrea Lunsford, and Janet Emig, *Four Worlds of Writing* (New York: Harper and Row, 1981), 423 pages.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Examples abound. See, for example, Dorothy Augustine's "Geometries and Words: Linguistics and Philosophy: A Model of the Composing Process," in *College English*, 43 (March 1981), 221-31. See also W. Ross Winterowd's "Syntax, Readability, Intention, and The Real World," in *Journal of English Teaching Techniques*, 10 (Summer 1980), 21-33. Often there is the tacit assumption among some "generative rhetoricians" that Chomsky is somehow their godfather. That Chomsky does not believe communication is the essential function of language is best shown in Carol F. Feldman's "Two Functions of Language," in the *Harvard Educational Review*, 47 (August 1977), 282-93.

[2]William Zinsser, *On Writing Well* (New York: Harper and Row, 1980), p. 20.

TWO TEXTS FOR ALL REASONS

WHO: ADRIENNE WADE

WHAT: **THE COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY WRITING VENTURE**

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SACRAMENTO SCENE

(Continued on Page 7)

Solano CC's Faculty Senate will propose to the Statewide Academic Senate that it adopt a position in favor of statewide standards. Solano's FS thinks that if all 106 colleges were to pull together instead of "in 106 different directions" that the Chancellor's Office and the Legislature would be more amenable. The Solano group wants to "upgrade" (presumably both courses and students) by having all departments "establish clear minimum standards" in "expository writing skills" and having all general education courses "require the students to practice expository writing skills, either by essay exam or reports"; and have the students' "expository skill performance" be a part of their grade. It wants to "retain" students by requiring them to take placement exams and be "channeled into remedial and developmental courses"; and to assure that students can transfer by giving the students in various sections of a course an exam that would cover the main points of its course outline; also to have instructors consult with their counterparts at nearby UC and CSUC campuses. My sources (infallible, of course) think that this proposal will not pass, that the Statewide Academic Senate will insist that each CC campus determine for itself what the statewide standard is for its students. We shall see.

☆ ☆ ☆

LINGUISTIC GEMS: You may have noticed that some company now sells an "erasable pen."

Administrator

Dizzily circular, roundly redundant as a yo yo,
His drooping double backs dangling twinly
Like siamese participles, he turns on himself,
or similar zeros,
Stringing himself along, a travelling cliche
Transversing nowhere, trapped in his length, frayed
To a fuss from frequent expansions, sudden retractions.
He pulls at his own heart string. Contraction
Tugs like an ego: his sliding line tightens on nothing.

BILL BURNS
Rio Hondo College

Logic Ain't Everything

When I hear myself talking too much
For anyone to want to listen
I should stop immediately, but
The wrong discipline requires me
To finish, somehow, the sentence,
Generally with a number of subordinate clauses,
Parenthetical elements, tortuous phrases,
Appalling pauses, and with pear-shaped diction,
Fragrant and orotund, turgidly convoluted
In the thick relief of old brocade,
As it were, rounded off, as though,
Needless to say, a minor artisan
Had spun a stagnant logic
To dissemble, however ineffectively,
The simple loss of his wits.

MORT TENENBAUM
West Lost Angeles College

ECCTYC

inside english

Vol. VIII, No. 3 | Journal of the English Council of California Two-Year Colleges | March 1982

INSIDE *inside english*

ECCTYC Looks At The Profession

A professional book reviewer who also happens to teach English at Mt. San Antonio College, suggests that doing both—reviewing and teaching—can keep "you alive in the professional areas you really *profess*—reading and writing."
page 3

For one teacher of English (who represents many) the Southland Council of Teachers of English's Conference of the Living Tree both soothed his soul and revitalized his commitment to the profession.
page 4

What do you do when intelligent students suddenly seem to resist understanding what you are trying to teach them? One literature teacher suggests that it may be best to do nothing.
page 5

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Letters .....page 2
Poetry .....pages 3, 4, 5
President's Message .....page 7
REviews .....page 6
Sacramento Scene .....page 7
Upstate/Downstate .....page 8

Writing to Learn Writing

By JUDITH HERT
San Bernardino College

LAST SEMESTER when I gave my composition class a series of what I called "practices," my prime motive was to increase the number of words my students would write. I hoped these practices would help compensate for the emphasis in my composition course on rewriting a few essays rather than on completing many different essays. I was, however, unprepared for what the students and I discovered through the practices.

The practices themselves were designed with a given structure to be done in one sitting as drafts on an assigned subject. I didn't want to read wandering journal entries, nor did I want the students to take too much time away from writing and rewriting the graded essays. This was why I provided the subject and the structure. I told the students that these practices were, in fact, drafts that, though required, would not be given a letter grade. I explained that these writing tasks would provide practice in fluency and in using writing as a tool for creating and discovering ideas. My own motive remained to give the students some relatively manageable writing assignments apart from the formal essays in order to increase the number of words required in the course.

To serve these purposes the practices were designed as three-part tasks that moved from the concrete to the abstract (the easiest direction for most writers). For instance, one practice read: "1) describe a situation in which someone gave you advice, 2) explain why you took or failed to take that advice, and 3) explain what you think constitutes good advice." [This assignment is taken directly from William E. Coles, Jr., *The Plural I*, New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1978. Other practices, designed by me, concerned the nature of work, the nature of play, a difficult decision, and failed expectations.] I also explained to the students that, like the rest of the course work, the practices needed to be read and commented on by at least two other students before I would accept them.

A SAMPLE PRACTICE

Below is one student's first practice writing, a draft she turned in the next class meeting after the assignment was given. (I gave the students five practice assignments which they could do in any order they chose.) This particular practice was written on the subject of advice, the assignment described above.

What Is Good Advice?

Advice is cheap; 25¢ will get you both "Dear Abby" and "Billy Graham" in the same paper. I have an aunt who loves giving advice.

In the winter of 1974, I told my family that I was leaving Chicago and moving to California with a girlfriend. My aunt immediately seized her golden opportunity; she phoned me the next day with a truckload of advice. She told me, "Girl, I wouldn't move to California if somebody paid me! All them hippie-cult crazy freaks and potheads out there. Girl, you got it made living with your daddy and mama. Why you want to go way on the other side of the world, where they got smog, earthquakes, and a bunch of tutti-frutties? You won't find no man, no job, or no friends. Girl, all you gonna find is a bunch of trouble; you can mark my words."

As you see, I didn't follow her advice. Why should I? I didn't ask for her advice (good or bad), I didn't need it, and I certainly didn't want it! Especially not the advice of a single, fifty-eight-year-old woman, who has lived with her mother all her life. She has never been any further than downtown Chicago and is afraid of everyone and everything, including her own shadow.

Good advice in my opinion is advice that is not based on one's own values, beliefs, or morality. Good advice is not trampling on someone else's feelings and contributing to a person's fears or inadequacies. Good advice is non-didactic (not preaching a sermon at someone), and it is letting the person make up his or her mind. Perhaps that is why prayer works sometimes, for some people—because God is mute, she lets you work it out for yourself.

OBSERVATIONS MADE

Though this practice was written by a student in a second semester composition course and is one of the most entertaining of those I received, other practices in both first and second semester composition courses were successful in similar ways, and some were far better in answering the third part of the practice question: what is good advice. Also, though the practice given above has charms all its own, it serves to illustrate the observations I want to make about these assignments.

First, as was true for many practices, this was the best piece this writer wrote all semester, even though she wrote it quickly in one sitting and considered it a draft. And, though all her work had a certain flair, she found it necessary to take her essays through four or five drafts in order to achieve proficient papers. Her short research paper went through five drafts in order to be free of awkwardness and errors. In fact, her practices generally were better than the first drafts of any of her essays, whatever the subject.

Second, though the practices seldom contained formal or surface organization, they often exhibited a thought sequence that made the writing seem more unified and coherent than some of the more obviously organized writings done by the same students. In other words, though there was never in the practices what one could identify as a thesis or a topic sentence, there was often a relation between details and ideas that gave the paper a clear internal unity. Of course, the three-part structure of the assignment and its movement from concrete to abstract provided an organization; nevertheless, the unity within the individual parts was also often more interesting and complex than was achieved elsewhere by the same writer using topic sentences.

This was true for many, probably most, of the students. Writing freely to discover their own ideas, they wrote with more ease, more vitality, and with fewer errors (except for spelling and punctuation) than they did on formal essays which received a letter grade. In the practices they created individual voices and styles. It was as if they had discovered themselves as writers.

THE QUESTIONS RAISED

As a result of my experience with these practices, I have asked myself a number of questions about the way I

(Continued on Page 4)

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Letters

SOME DON'T LIKE US . . .

Dear Editor:

After reading the September [1981] issue of *inside english* (which I received only at the end of the first week of November), I felt outraged and insulted. If any teacher other than an English teacher at a two-year college should see this issue, I would also feel acute embarrassment. I simply do not understand how material of such poor quality could find its way into this publication or how an issue could be sent out in such an unedited state.

Both of these deficiencies are amply exemplified in the main article, "Where Research and Practice Meet: The Theoretical Foundations of an English Program," by Ruth Maddox. This piece is poorly written. (I will not say anything about the content since I found little there to comment on.) It is full of "educationese," faulty syntax, and clumsy expression—appropriate more, perhaps to an administrator than to an English teacher. (Or should that be "facilitator of learning"?) Does Ms. Maddox really "conference" with her students? Three times she uses "conference" as a verb. Are we to assume that, unlike most of us, she never "confers" with them? Or consider the syntax of the following sentence: "These levels are successively more difficult, and a person must perform successfully on one level before advancing to the next, much like Piaget's stages of developement [sic] in children." I am still trying to determine what are "much like Piaget's stages of developement [sic] in children" in this sentence. Or, finally, consider this barbaric beauty: "If students can be taught responsibility for their academic progress, the class will not only accomplish improving writing skills but also improving learning skills in general." Parallelism, like spelling, does count. In addition, the clumsy construction needs attention. I think the independent clause would be a little more coherent (and a little more like English) if it read, "they will improve not only their writing skills but also their learning skills." I blush—and shudder—to think that a composition teacher is the author of such an ill-written essay. Obviously she should spend more time on the "practice" than on the "research" and the "theory." And the editor should exercise more critical judgment in selecting the entries for publication.

In addition to the deficiency in the quality of the writing is that in the quality of the editing. In fact, I see little or no evidence of editing. In the article there are no fewer than fourteen errors which I will not ascribe to Ms. Maddox, including "developement" (twice) and "pratice" (three times). Some of these may be typographical; others are not. All, however, should have been detected and amended during proofreading.

My time is too valuable to waste on such shoddy material as this, and should future issues show no improvement, they will be speedily committed to the round file.

Sincerely yours,
ROBERT THOMPSON
Department of English
City College of San Francisco

Editor's reply: (1) Yes, there were several errors—typographical and otherwise—that should have been caught. I guess these tired old eyes need new glasses—or, better yet, a second pair of eyes. Any volunteers? (2) Ms. Maddox should not be held responsible for editing errors that occurred in her article. (3) Did the December issue end up in your "round file"? (4) How about an article from you?

Ruth Maddox's reply: I appreciate Mr. Thompson's astute reminder that the word "conference" in the strictest sense is still a noun in our constantly changing language, and I also appreciate his skillful revision that improved an equally parallel sentence. His concern for maintaining rigor in language and for eliminating errors in copy, though outspoken and harsh in tone, are commendable.

. . . OTHERS DO

Dear Editor:

Just before "going on" in my ESL class, I found *inside english* [September 1981] in my box. It's a fine edition. I was very pleased that my article ["Teaching English as a Strange Language," p. 4] finally found its way into print. Also, "Bilingual Bridge" and the poem "Long Khanh in the Writing Lab" form a complementary trio with "As a Strange Language."

. . . your efforts in bringing out our journal are much appreciated.

Very sincerely,
ROSELLE M. LEWIS
Los Angeles Valley College

[*Ms. Lewis' book reviews appear regularly in the "You" section and occasionally in "The Book Review" section of the Los Angeles Times.*]

TWO TEXTS FOR ALL REASONS

Dear Editor:

The excellent work done by Dr. Adrienne Wade in developing *The College and University Writing Venture* and *The Literary Venture* clearly warrants this testimonial. Having had the privilege of initially introducing this material to the students here at San Diego City College, I am certain that the materials are ordered, comprehensive, and appropriate to the abilities of the students. I believe that these texts meet the goals of both the students in English Composition and the instructors in English.

I am expecting an increase in enrollment levels in subsequent offerings of this method . . . Evaluation criteria, standards, and methodologies have been made clear and appropriate to the goals of the class. I believe that this method offers a viable alternative to the traditional approaches and increases the value of learning for many students whose cognitive development needs this stimulus.

Sincerely,
R. M. DIXON
Cultural Studies Divison
San Diego City College

[*Adrienne Wade's texts were advertised in the December 1981 issue of i.e.*]

COMPLIMENTS

Dear Editor:

I got a few compliments for my book review ["Bicycling, the Inner Ear, and Writing Theory," p. 6] which appeared in December's *i.e.*, and I have told the complimenters that much of whatever merit is to be found in that piece is the result of Barbara Bilson's editing and of Barbara Bilson's having worked with me on it . . .

Regards,
DON K. PIERSTORFF
Orange Coast College

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KEEPING ALIVE BY READING AND WRITING

Book Reviewers as Role Models

By JIM MOORE
Mt. San Antonio College

The following is the writer's response to ECCTYC's Fall Conference (5-7 November 1981). He chaired the session "Bringing English to the Community," with Ann Connor (Foothill), Pat McGrath (Chabot), and Gerald Messner (Canada) on the panel. After discussion concluded, he attended the general session at which Mary Hedin (College of Marin) and James Fetler (Foothill)—winners of the Iowa School of Letters for Short Fiction awards for 1979 and 1980 respectively—spoke about "Community College Faculty as Writers." Later that afternoon he joined a group of community college teachers at the session "Impromptu Book Talks" to discuss books—to read and/or to use.

There I was, fresh from chairing an ECCTYC session on "Bringing English to the Community," and my head was full of role models. Something sounded wrong, therefore, when at the next session I overheard a colleague grumbling: "It's all well and good to talk about interesting books we'd like to share with others—but who has *time* to read?"

It was both right and wrong, like everything else. On the one hand, a teacher of reading and writing (is there another way of defining English teaching?) should practice what s/he preaches. On the other hand, if a teacher is any good, s/he is getting students to write voluminously and spending a lot of time reading—and rereading—and re-rereading the students' work. And on around in an endless circle.

Once again I consulted my own experience (Dear *i.e.* reader: if you are tired of this, please let me know) and came up with a prescription. If it sounds good, try it.

☆ ☆ ☆

In the "English-Community" panel we had heard from one teacher that her college would try to match remedial/Freshman comp students with successful "role models" in their community over a one-year period. The role models could be from any sector as long as they matched up with student interest.

Another panel member pointed out that good writers' conferences also supplied role models. If we wanted to have good student writing, why not show students good writers and let them interact? She then pointed at me: "And he's a student role model, too, because he writes."

It's true, I write. A couple of texts, theater reviews, theater features, things like this, book reviews—book reviews? The prescription began to take shape. Why couldn't a teacher keep "up" on interesting books *and* role-model writing at the same time? Simply, why can't teachers do book reviews for their local newspapers?

Well, of course they can. This isn't hard to arrange, either, since unless it's the *Los Angeles* or *New York Times*, there are usually more books that need reviewing than willing and able people to review them. If you have a newspaper near you, I'll give you 5 to 1 the editors would love to have you review for them. Call them up and give it a try.

Not that book reviewing is the way to fame and fortune. Even at the *L.A. Times* nobody gets to review enough books to keep them in electronic typewriters. Most typical is the "You review the book, you can keep it" approach, which, if you happen to believe in the power and worth of books, isn't a bad deal.

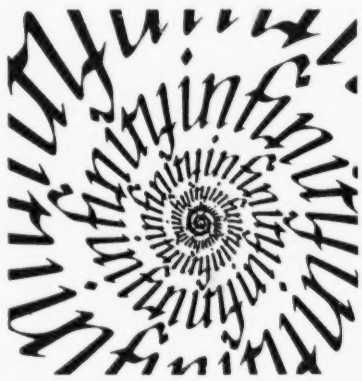
Saying something helpful about a 500-page book in 250 words is a challenge; it can't help polishing your writing. Reading a book, knowing that you'll *have* to say something helpful about it can only intensify the reading experience. Isn't this what we want our students to do? Isn't book reviewing for your local newspaper *real* writing, as opposed to some of the assignments we either foist upon our students or share with them? And finally, if you learn how to write a good book review, can't you teach your students how to do it, too?

Not to belabor the point, I think that in the ten years since I started to review assorted stuff for my local newspaper, I have become a better teacher of writing. And as a couple of ECCTYC panel members noted at another session, the teacher-who-writes gains great credibility in the classroom.

But you don't have to write a novel or a prize-winning book of poems to do those things. Reviewing books is a handy way, and it keeps you reading. That is, it keeps you alive in the professional areas you really *profess*—reading and writing. I recommend it.

"Purvis is a purveyor of the printed word."

Reprinted with the courtesy of *The New Yorker* magazine.



THE LIMITS OF LANGUAGE

Out there, the sensory chaos rages
like an Indian sun.
In here, I travel like a raja, shielded
from the April sun behind curtains and fringes,
swaying along on the hardened shoulders
of the words we were born to.
Out there, the sands stretch flatly north
through thornbush and boulders.
Costumed in the red, gossamer skirts of the dancer,
I travel in silver ankle-bracelets, belled,
my fingers tilted and tipped in a classic pose.

Out there, something rises like a monstrous toad,
trickling sand down its sides,
a voluptuary in fat, warted leather,
blinking blue indolent eyelids
over the bulge of its golden eyes.
Blinking, dry and amused, as we pass,
like a perspective we can't get inside of.

Yes, we inherit the consequences,
though light and shadow should interplay.

Below the bridge as we pass
(having inherited the consequences of its kind),
a monitor lizard lounges downstream,
huge and marking its wet shape on the dry, gray rock.
The flat sands stretch north to Jaffna
For the dancer, costumed and bangled, and for you.
From here, through a hole in the curtain,
we can see almost into India
as we sway along,
nearer and nearer the border of what we know.

Yes, these words, their formal structure,
these words, their sequence,
following one after the other,
so it is necessary that one is this kind,
another that,
are like stepping stones over chaos,
like a palanquin navigating the wastes,
like traveling along in a jeweled darkness.

ANITA WILKINS
Cabrillo College

SCTE's Living Tree Conference Bears Fruit

By KEVIN J. RYAN
Santa Monica College

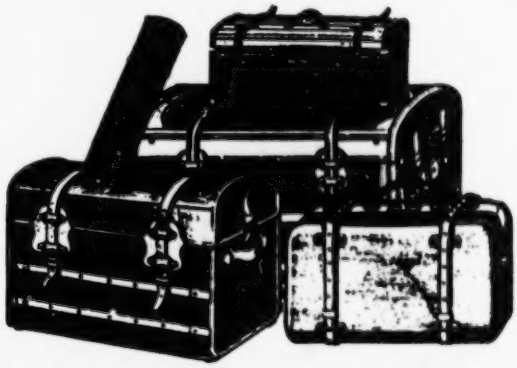
It's an awkward and harsh sounding place, unless you realize the *j* is pronounced like an *h*, the *a* is silent, and the two remaining vowels are long. But then, two hundred English teachers would know that and have no trouble pronouncing the name of the peaceful town of Ojai. Especially those who have convened there before.

Ojai is Indian for "nest," and the town is appropriately situated in the Sierra Madre Mountains and is guarded by 6,000-foot Mount Topatopa. As you drive through Casitas Pass and drop down into the valley, you have the distinct impression that H.G. Wells' inventions are not all fiction. It is Friday, November 6, 1981, yet no neon signs yell at you to "enter and buy," the sidewalks are nearly deserted, each lane off the short main street is lined with neat green-lawned homes, and the cow to condo rate is easily several hundred to one. Only trees tower above the homes, only crickets disturb the night, and only the moon competes with the stars to brighten the evening sky. Is it any wonder the Southland Council of Teachers of English has chosen this retreat the past eleven years to assemble its tired and huddled masses?

Many of the two hundred English teachers arrive at the Ojai Valley Inn to attend the Conference of the Living Tree after dusk, after a two hour (or longer) drive, and after having taught all day. The wine reception, the stuffed breast of capon, the opening ceremony, and the keynote speaker (the traveling troubador from bucolic Big Sur, Ric Masten) pass, for some, like faded stereoscopic vignettes. It isn't until the next morning when the sun rises and it is obvious they are in Camelot, when *students, administration, burn out,* and *tension* sound like foreign words, that they realize the transformation that has taken place.

After a buffet breakfast, the teachers disperse to designated rooms among the Inn's low bungalows scattered along the edge of a sprawling green golf course. For the next two hours they sit in on any two of twenty-two presentations by fellow teachers intended to inspire and offer interesting new classroom lessons. After a repast of prime rib, chowder, fresh fruit, vegetables, a garden on crushed ice to build a salad from, and your choice of six different desserts, you can attend one of the eight presentations offered between 1:30 and 2:30.

By this time, you feel strange and—

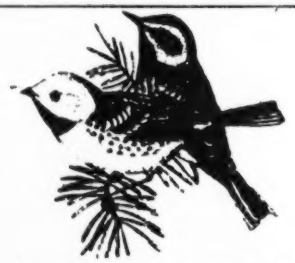


wonderful. As if someone really cares about you. You are treated as if you are *somebody*: during breakfast your bed is made and during dinner it is pulled out and turned down. Waiters and waitresses are at your beck and call, people young enough to be your students, yet they all have smiles on their faces and call you sir and madam and actually seem delighted to help you. The only criticism comes from the cool breeze and radiant sunshine that reprimands you for not coming sooner.

From 2:30 until the champagne reception at six, you are free to take a guided walking tour of Ojai, rap for an hour with Ric Masten, watch college football, participate in a book exchange, ride horses, take your own tour of the valley, or just relax in your room—maybe start a log in the fireplace and look out any window at the view.

The filet mignon, baked potato, and whipped-cream cake are aided in their digestion by the Hot Frogs Jumping Jazz Band, after which the teachers disappear in groups to view Peter Seller's *The Wrong Box* or a slide presentation of California authors or to just sit and talk.

Sunday's breakfast is followed by guest speaker Dr. August Coppola, Francis Ford's brother, and closing remarks on the success of the conference. And just how much of a success becomes clear as you drive up and out of the nest. You feel confident, maybe even brave. You catch yourself in the rearview mirror—smiling, for no reason at all. And once you realize where you are heading and what tomorrow will bring, students and administration are actually people you wouldn't mind seeing again, maybe even look forward to as you do the next Living Tree Conference.



In August, 1976, I tried to scale Mt. Demavend in Persia. (It's the mountain logo for Paramount films). It is also 18,700 feet high! 14,000 feet was my measure: the snow-line. In the attempt, however, I felt I reached another peak of greater significance to me.

DEMAVEND
THE MOUNTAINS
ARE MY VEINS.
RUMI

Loosened from the
walking ties of sleep
I moved through the
rooms of the town
Pushing open the doors
of the city streets
Standing on the
Threshold of the world
Above, the listening
kneel of calm
Your aura gathered
about you
I spelled by the
solid grandeur
By the harvest
of white grace
Fallen from the light
tree of the world
Every blade of prayer
Gathering in white
drifts of irresistibility
Albed in radiance
from hem to crown
I rest my thoughts
Beside
The quiet power of
your claims.

HARRY GANLEY
Santa Barbara Community College

WRITING

(Continued from Page 1)

teach writing. I have asked myself, for instance, if we composition teachers don't try to teach writing as something more technical (and therefore more teachable?) than it is; and, thereby, ironically, make it harder than it has to be. Specifically, I wonder if our emphasis on planning before writing, on thesis statements and topic sentences, on rewriting, even on sentence combining techniques and coherent devices, and on

editing skills (not to mention correctness!) isn't often distracting and misleading to the student. Doesn't such a program, typical of so many texts, slight the central importance of thinking on paper about the subject with which the writing is concerned? And I also wonder if an overemphasis on the finished product and the grade it receives isn't sometimes counterproductive.

I am not suggesting that we stop teaching the techniques which can be taught. I intend to continue to teach organizational skills and coherence techniques. After all, much of the writing required of students involves chiefly the ordering and conveying of material as much or more than it requires original thought. But, I am going to put more emphasis on asking useful questions and on pushing my students to ask themselves questions, for I have decided that as writers my students need to concentrate less on the forms used to describe well-written products and, instead, to pay attention to what it is they are saying, how they sound, and what the readers' reactions might be. In short, I am less and less convinced that the techniques useful to describe successful prose are useful in generating it.

As I think about the way I teach writing, my central concern has become the assignments themselves. After all, they are the problems the student must solve. As much as anything in the course, they define the writing occasion. It is in the act of responding to the assignments that the student has the opportunity to learn to write. Thus, it seems to me that if I can devise assignments that call for thoughtful, well-developed responses written in a readable style and authentic voice, perhaps I then can reward and reinforce the students' best efforts and, thereby, teach writing. (I do think it unlikely that the students will ask themselves interesting questions in the writing context if no one else has.)

WRITING AS KNOWING

As I write this, I am planning for the next semester and I know that as I use the practices again, I will find better ways to help the students work with the third part of the question. We will spend more time discussing, arguing, developing terminology, and reading samples aloud. I will be firm about returning undeveloped practices for completion. Also I will ask each student to choose the most promising practice to polish as a formal essay for a letter grade.

Toward the end of the semester the students and I discussed the advantages and disadvantages of the practice assignments. The students' reactions, though mixed, were generally positive. Several said they appreciated exploring the meaning of their own experiences. Many said they enjoyed the challenge of the third part of the question though a few felt that the third part was too demanding. They all thought that writing to a given format for the purpose of creating ideas enabled them to write more freely and successfully. What seemed highly valuable to them

and to me was that in concentrating on writing as a way of knowing *first* and of communicating second, they achieved their best writing.

WHAT I DID WHEN...

Resistance Seemed The Name of the Game

By GEORGIA LOGAN
De Anza College

How are we, as teachers of literature, to deal with the particularly bright student who interprets a poem or story in a way that doesn't quite make sense? The sort of student I'm referring to wriggles when confronted with her lack of logic, but resists seeing what would—under other circumstances—be obvious. It is because the student is above average in both intelligence and performance that the resistance is puzzling. Where does it come from? This question has intrigued me over the years. And the answers I found in two particular cases gave me pause.

The first involved a young woman in an Introduction to Literature class. She wrote a paper analyzing William Blake's "The Clod and the Pebble." In it she suggested that the clod and the pebble might represent the female and male principles respectively. Up to this point her analysis made use of evidence from the text to support her conclusions. But then she went on to insist, with creative illogic, that Blake was trying to demonstrate in the poem how the two kinds of love could and would be reconciled. The more I tried to explain how her conclusion didn't follow from what she herself had said, the more agitated and irrational she became.

What was happening here? In this case, the student turned out to be a devout Catholic whose parents had recently separated. She saw her mother as the Clod whose selfless love had not been rewarded and her father as the Pebble, pleasing only himself. The impending divorce was unthinkable for her. They *must* reconcile! Hence her conclusion

that Blake had created a marvellous synthesis of these two kinds of love and her unwillingness to consider that the poem might be saying something else.

The other such student was a Vietnam war veteran in his third quarter of the Survey of English Literature. After writing consistently excellent papers, he wrote a positively incoherent piece on Wilfred Owen's "Arms and the Boy." I could make no sense out of it and called him in for a conference. He had no notion that what he had handed in was not perfectly clear, but it gradually emerged that the poem had set off such a painful memory that he could not speak of it without trembling and choking up.

The memory? After an explosion on the battlefield, the disembodied arm of one of his fellow Marines landed in his lap. Clutching the arm and oblivious to the heavy fire all around, he wandered about the battlefield until his CO had tackled him and knocked him to the ground. Small wonder, then, that he had been psychologically unprepared to handle the personification of the arms in Owen's poem.

From these two experiences I learned that what appears to be resistance to what we are trying to teach *may* have nothing whatever to do with the clarity of our explanations or the intelligence of our students. We cannot always know what experiences our students are having. But we can be sensitive to the idea that the reading may evoke emotions that the students cannot recognize or cope with. Pushing them to see what they can't yet handle may be counterproductive.

A MEMORIAL FOR THE CHILDREN OF YUBA CITY

Burning wind seared
The bloom from our branches,
Withered our grass,
Wasted our sprouting grain.
The wells of our weeping
Went dry.
The streams of our lives
Drained to stone.
On the edge of our desert earth
A gray haze of despair
Hung like a shroud.
Night smothered us in a pall
Of unbearable sadness.
In the light of morning
We lifted up our arms
As suppliants and were mocked
By the blue deceitful smile
Of each new day.
Among our fruitless trees
Waiting crows winged and rested
On our brittle limbs,
Come to feed on our tragic anger.

KEN MACDONALD
Yuba College

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN
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REviews

"REviews" features discussions of books and media programs that are suitable for use in writing or literature courses or that have special interest for teachers of English. These reviews should be from 100 to 500 words and should evaluate the book's or program's effective use in a classroom, in a learning resource center, by an individual student, or by the instructor. Include with the review all pertinent publication information, the number of pages or length of running time, and the cost.

A GOOD SHORT READER FOR COMP COURSES

By DICK LUNDQUIST
Cabrillo College

If in your writing courses you have use for a slim, inexpensive supplemental text made up of appealing and readable student writings, you should get a copy of *Look Who's Talking*, edited by Ann Connor of Foothill College and Marlene Griffith of Laney College.

The nature of the book is best described by the editors themselves in the opening of their introduction: "In *Look Who's Talking*, community college students talk about their ideas, their lives, their feelings. They talk in their own voices, from their own experiences, showing the world as it looks to them."

The reiterated emphasis here on the *students themselves* is the key to the book, which is very much (to use one more time the crucial pronoun) THEIR book, rather than a collection of writings meant to embody some narrow rhetorical or pedagogical technique or concept. The only implied principle here is that students should write in their own voices and about their own interests. And the corollary principle is, of course, that such

writings can be interesting and enjoyable for others to read.

Such is indeed the case with these twelve writings, which follow no particular pattern and which range from simple narrative to complex analysis. A diverse group of men and women of varying ages and backgrounds write about what they have seen (a Vietnamese woman and a Vietnam veteran describe the horrors of war), what they have realized (a truck driver and former radio-TV ad and news writer mourn the loss of the work ethic, of taking pleasure in doing one's job well), and what they can remember from their past (a woman from a small town in Tennessee and a man from rural Mississippi write about their fathers). Other writings include a reggae musician born in Jamaica explaining how James Brown inspired his pursuit of music and a Pacifica mother reflecting on her young son's experience with a harsh, win-crazed basketball coach. Another woman recalls growing up in a narrow-minded, self-protective Eastern suburb and discovering years later that the controlled atmosphere of the suburbs had left her with a "monochromatic vision of a polychromatic world."

These and the other writings in *Look Who's Talking* are neither academically pretentious nor condescendingly childlike. They are honest statements about real experiences, and they bridge the gap nicely between personal and expository writing, between narrative and analysis. They are not intended as models for close imitation, but they do serve as interesting examples of what students can do when they write about what they know and feel.

Although the editors indicate that *Look Who's Talking* "works especially well with beginning writing students, both young and older adults"—those in remedial writing and basic skills courses—the book seems equally appropriate for 1A level courses. Either way, the book's trim size (53 pages) and modest cost ($3.00) make it easy to use without disrupting course structure by adding an additional burden (physical or financial) to the students. In addition, there's a handy list of writing suggestions in the back along with a brief review of common grammatical and mechanical errors.

One last point: the book is physically honest and appealing. The plain white cover is not graphically slick, the volume nestles comfortably in the hand, the print is large and the margins generous. Best of all, each written piece is accompanied by a photograph of the author and a brief biographical note, which very nicely reinforce the sense of real people speaking in real voices.

It's not hard to see why this text has been well received by the students and teachers who have used it. Why not try it yourself in your classes? I think you'd be pleased with the results.

Ann Connor and Marlene Griffith, *Look Who's Talking*, Berkeley: Leopold-Littleberry Press, 1981, 53 pages, $3.00. [Copies can be ordered from Leopold-Littleberry Press, 2124 Kittredge Box 52, Berkeley, CA, 94704 or by calling (415) 845-2206, ext. 25, 12-6 weekdays.]

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We also have some California authors we'd like you to know:

Joyce Stith, of California State University-Hayward, is the author of *THE BASIC WRITING BOOK*. It's new and will be available in March 1982, paperbound, c. 384 pages. This carefully paced guide to the fundamentals of grammar and punctuation contains more exercises, in greater variety, than any comparable book. The simple handbook reference system, Independent Study sections, concise and clear explanations, and thorough Instructor's Manual make this a text you won't want to miss.

Charles W. Dawe and ***Edward A. Dornan,*** both of Orange Coast College, are the authors of *ONE TO ONE: Resources for Conference-Centered Writing*. Using the "Garrison Method", this excellent text stresses the importance of students and teachers sitting down, side-by-side, discussing student writing. The authors believe that there are two ways to learn to write well. One is to write, a lot. The other way is to get sound advice from someone who knows how to write. Upon these foundations, Dawe and Dornan have written this comprehensive, yet not overbearing, introduction to writing. Forward by Roger Garrison. 1981/354 pages/paper/with a complete Instructor's Manual.

D.L. Emblen, of Santa Rosa Junior College, is the co-author with ***Donald Hall*** of *THE WRITER'S READER, Third Edition*, to be published in January 1982. The new Third Edition of this best selling freshman composition text features a unique alphabetical organization allowing instructors complete flexibility in grouping the fine selections to fit their class objectives and their students' needs. 1982/paper/c. 544 pages/with complete Instructor's Manual.

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Kenneth Croft, of San Francisco State University, is the author of *READINGS ON ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE: For Teachers and Teacher Trainees, Second Edition*. This text is indeed a rare bird . . . at once one of the most useful texts available — covering reading, writing, vocabulary, understanding, and speaking — and also an excellent reference guide — including thorough examination of trends, literature, testing, practices, and lots more. 1980/587 pages/cloth.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Curriculum Control and . . . . . Curriculum Variety

For the past two years, all of us have been so aware of the overwhelming financial problems confronting education, and therefore our academic programs, that we have tended, consciously or subconsciously, to ignore what has been happening in the area of curriculum. Before we—the specialists in our field—lose all control of course prerequisites, content, and transferability, we must take a hard look at what is happening throughout the state and must seek to regain control of our curriculum.

Most of us would agree that the instructors within a discipline should be the ones to have control of their curricular offerings. Though we may secure valuable input from our colleagues in other departments and programs, we do not want them dictating our course offerings and course content. The fact is that we are moving quickly in the direction of having "outsiders" decide our curriculum. Let me cite but two obvious examples of such movement.

First, we might want to consider the role of the Academic Senate of California Community Colleges (ASCCC) in relation to this problem. No matter how strongly we might support the basic principle and philosophy of operation of this body, are we sure that they have taken the more appropriate direction in solving what they consider "problems" within the offerings of individual academic disciplines? Knowing that academic programs, individual course offerings, financial resources, and student needs and abilities differ widely from campus to campus throughout the state, we should find it hard to believe that any ASCCC committee can be truly representative and even harder to believe that such a committee made up of individuals from a variety of disciplines can satisfactorily address academic concerns of English departments.

Second, let us look at the latest fad to permeate educational circles: the Intersegmental Committee. Though cooperation among the various segments of higher education should be applauded and fostered, we need to set careful limits to the activities of these committees. There can be little question that intersegmental committees should establish guidelines for the academic content of parallel/transferable courses and that they should probably suggest a basic level of proficiency to be demonstrated by those students who successfully complete such courses. However, intersegmental committees cannot involve themselves in the areas of course prerequisites and/or entry level proficiencies for courses. Given the diverse nature of the student bodies among the segments, the pre-transfer level programs differ so widely that any attempt at comparison or uniformity is doomed. While we are focusing on intersegmental committees, we also need to remind ourselves to be conscious of the academic background of each individual committee member. Too often these committees have several members from outside the academic discipline being scrutinized.

Though we have concentrated on the problems and confusion of relinquishing control of curriculum to individuals from outside our discipline or from a different level of higher education, we might do well to conclude with a caution about being too hasty in efforts to establish our own "standards" for all English programs in community colleges across the state. Each campus has evolved its own series of English courses because that series best suits the needs of the community it services. Because a certain program is highly successful on Campus A is no assurance that it will work on Campus B. Understanding this, we must also understand that any proposed "standards" or "policies" are not going to apply equally to all campuses and must be interpreted and tailored to the individual campus. Though we can and should cooperate with each other, we must avoid the pitfall of dictating to one another. There is no value in regaining control of our curriculum only to lose credibility in failing to recognize the enviable and necessary variety of English programs offered by our sister campuses.

JIM CAGNACCI
City College of San Francisco

The Bleak Budget News——\$ACRAMENTO \$CENE——

By GORDON TAYLOR
Yuba College

Doubt, as is usually the case, is the order of the day in Sacramento and, consequently, in most public agencies in the state. How much money will we have to spend, and what will we be able to do and to continue to do? No doubt, your schools are having to cut their budgets for next year as mine is, and we are all looking for those things to cut that will not hurt too much. Governor Brown is counting on the state's economy to improve (a new idea for him) and on the voters disapproving a couple of initiatives in order to produce a balanced budget. But if these things do not occur, can he reduce it any more? Some people think that he has already cut it to disastrous levels. Some analysts purport that the state's budget will have a deficit in fiscal 1983 of around \$3 billion. They apparently base their projections of future income and deficits on current economic conditions and make no provisions for changing conditions that would, in turn, change that income and those deficits: things could get worse or change for the better. One might conclude that foretelling the future is a haphazard and chancy undertaking. In any case, the sad state of the economy and the cuts in federal programs (by Mr. Reagan and his administration, specifically) are blamed the most for our current difficulties. In an interesting sidelight, though, the County Supervisors' Association of California, appearing to support Mr. Reagan's policies, said, at its annual meeting in Fresno in November, that the government had made programs cost more while, at the same time, had made them less efficient. I do not know if it offered any examples or mentioned the schools. It did suggest, however, that the government could turn many of the things that it now does back, without much loss to anyone, to the organizations and the people who used to do them, to the private sector: not only to business and industry, but also to organizations like the Salvation Army, the Red Cross, and charities of various sorts.

[A thought—serious or frivolous: if we could con the Feds into reducing federal income taxes to, say 25 per cent, and into cutting federal government expenditures accordingly, and into . . . , then California's government could increase state income taxes by half, or even double them; and we could all be money ahead. The taxpayers would pay less; the State would likely be floating on the stuff. Some people who claim to know about these things say that a flat 10 per cent federal tax on income across the board, with no exemptions, no deductions, none of all that folderol, would bring as much money into the federal treasury as the current system does. Oh well, it was just a thought.]

Meanwhile, people are predicting new and further disasters for education. The teachers' unions are unhappy that President Reagan wants to demote the Department of Education to a simple foundation. They do not specify in clear language whether they are more upset because they think certain things would not get done or because they would not have the power they had under President Carter, because they could not call the Pres on the telephone and play with the big boys. They are disturbed that the President has cut \$5 billion (or \$2.5 billion, reports vary) from the educational budget. Apparently, the new budget proposes a net decrease of approximately \$3 billion from current levels: about \$10 billion for fiscal '83, down from nearly \$15 billion in fiscal '81.

Mr. Reagan hopes, of course, that the states will take over many of the various programs although many will no

doubt disappear. Congress after all, it is said, established many programs because it or some influential group thought they were necessary or thought that the local folks would not institute new programs without being forced to. Whether the programs or the budgetary cuts are good or bad, naturally, depends on one's point of view: there are as many people (who insist that they have many good reasons on their side) who do not believe in some programs, or believe that they have gone too far, as there are people who favor them. It is an old, classical political battle, and the combatants have taken their respective, morally superior positions. Since the time to make decisions is at hand, though, the debate must deal with these questions at least: To what extent should people be forced to do or to have something that they do not want or do not think is worthwhile? How much should they be made to pay for those things? How much can they pay for those things they do want? Has the Feds' intervention into local schools been beneficial, or has it, to an undesirable degree, dislocated educational standards and priorities? Will public education die if the Feds do not help pay for it or control it as they have done until now? Is different necessarily worse?

EXAMPLE:

The Rand Corporation reports that as children are taken out of classes to participate in special programs and projects their education is disrupted, and it seems that the migrants, the handicapped, the minorities, the poor are the more likely victims of these categorical aid programs. The intended beneficiaries of the programs become further disadvantaged since they do not have time to learn the usual subjects. The general program suffers and declines as well because too much money and attention are given to the special programs. One might be encouraged to conclude that the federal influences have not been all good. Whether that means, though, that we should rid ourselves of all federal aid to education is another question. Some would throw the whole thing out, others would say we need to review and control the programs (do I hear an echo somewhere?), and yet others would say that we need to strengthen them, that much more needs to be done.

Malcom Muggeridge once opined, during a discussion on a television talk show, that when the day came that we spent the entire public budget on education we should have reached a state of total illiteracy. If the current criticisms of the schools are at all valid, it does seem that as we have spent more and more money and conducted more and more studies and managed more and more surveys our students have become less and less well educated. It is difficult to tell if the one causes the other or if they are only symptomatic. Considering the universities' and the colleges' new entrance and graduating requirements and the recent cuts in the schools' budgets, the trend may reverse itself.

BLOWS BY BROWN

But let us not anticipate too much too soon: Governor Brown came out the other day and, in his speech on the state of the State, struck a blow for non-education. He has decided to encourage technical and vocational training, mathematical and technical subjects, although of a somewhat higher level than the usual training in welding and repairing automobiles, so that we can compete with the Japanese. It is quite evident that our current students

(Continued on Page 8)

News From Our Regions

REGION VII: NORTH LOS ANGELES

Directors: Stephen Statham, Los Angeles Valley College; Nina Theiss, Santa Monica College.

Los Angeles Trade-Technical College will host Region VII's Spring Conference, Thursday, 20 May 1982, from 1:00 to 5:00. The conference will focus on teaching the foreign student. Speakers will be Irene Park, ESL specialist and Professor in Continuing Education at Cal State L.A., and Dr. Steven Krashen, chair of the Department of Linguistics at U.S.C. and well-known specialist in language learning. The conference is open to all who are interested in language learning.

The Los Angeles Community Colleges (CC) and the California State University and Colleges (CSUC) have set up The Faculty Institute for Improvement of Basic Skills Instruction, a cooperative effort aimed at the improvement of instruction in writing, reading, mathematics, and English as a second language. The functions of the Institute are organized in part around three college clusters, each consisting of a CSUC campus and the three community colleges contributing the largest number of upper division students to that campus. Faculty specialists from both the CSUC and CC systems represent each cluster on each of the subject area advisory committees.

The ESL committee has been the most active this year. It presented a two-day workshop last December. The workshop participants heard addresses by Richard Allwright, a visiting professor from the University of Lancaster; Patricia Simmons Taylor, the director of UCLA Writing Programs; Ruth Cathcart, UC Berkeley, the professional consultant for the ESL committee; Steve Ross, CSU Long Beach Language Institute; and Francis Hinofotis, UCLA testing program. Also scheduled to speak was Sandra McKay, CSU San Francisco, but she was prevented from attending by a fogged-in San Francisco airport. However, she will speak at the follow-up ESL workshop scheduled in March.

REGION X: SAN DIEGO

Directors: Elaine McLevie, Grossmont College; Shirley Sykes, San Diego Mesa College.

On November 21, 1981, thirty-two English faculty from five Region X community colleges and San Diego State University met together to read and score holistically approximately six hundred essays, written earlier on a common topic by their freshman composition students. Although few of the participants had ever scored papers holistically, our level of reliability was very close to that achieved in large, statewide Educational Testing Service (ETS) readings.

This Saturday morning session was a first-time-ever attempt to bring together our community college and state university faculties. Most felt that it was a valuable experience—one to be repeated in future semesters—both for the practice in group scoring and for the opportunity to meet and work with colleagues from different campuses.

$ACRAMENTO $CENE

(Continued from Page 7)

do not know much about mathematics and quite thoroughly misunderstand science, but the Governor said nothing, as far as I can determine, regarding our students' deplorable lack of understanding about the English language and the humanities, an understanding of which would give them a framework, a sense of values, by which they could measure the worth of our technological society and put it into some kind of perspective. Besides, most people spend only thirty-five to forty-five hours each week at earning their living and contributing to the economic and technical wealth of the country. We need some kind of basis from which to understand and figure out what to do with the remaining sixty-five to eighty or so hours even if it is nothing more significant than learning to demand better television shows. Teaching our students about English and the humanities probably would not cost any more money than we now spend if we simply insisted on teaching what we say we teach, insisted that the students learn the language, that they read, that sort of thing. In spite of a few gains in the reading scores, the printed word is still a mystery to many students. They can identify words all right, but they find it difficult to extract the ideas from what they read; they find it hard to finish books, to keep their minds on their reading: they seem unfamiliar with the task. (Bruno Bettelheim had some very interesting and probably significant things to say about "Why Children Don't Like To Read" in the November issue of *The Atlantic*. The National Institute of Education has published a report on the subject as well. While we advertise that we teach language and reading, we apparently do not, really. In order to do so and to include the humanities as well, in order to carry out such an ambitious program, we would, of course, have to shake a few people, upset them, make them nervous and frantic—notably the State's bureaucracies, the schools' boards and administrators, and a few parents and teachers; but many people believe the effort would be worth the results.

An incidental note: Senator S.I. Hayakawa announced his retirement the other day. I, for one, will miss him. He managed to put much of Washington's work (and by implication many others' work as well) into its proper perspective. Whilst it may be said that he introduced little new legislation, it may also be said that his commentary on new legislation and the committees' work was profound: he slept.

LINGUISTIC GEMS: Large sign in red neon letters two feet high, observed in a department store: "Cameras and Electronics." Query: If one can buy a camera, can one also buy an electronic?

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26

ECCTYC
ENGLISH COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA TWO YEAR COLLEGES

inside english

Vol. VIII, No. 4 | Journal of the English Council of California Two-Year Colleges | June 1982

INSIDE *inside english*

ECCTYC

Looks At How and What We Teach

Is teaching like lovemaking? One teacher thinks it is. "I love to fly, and words, properly woven, are the magic carpet . . . When I teach correctly, I speak to that same love in my students."
page 3

More. More. More. More *Othello*, more *Huckleberry Finn*, more e.e. cummings. More Humanities and literature.
page 3

You, too, can create "Baffle-Gab" using John Lovas' "Community College Course Classification Baffle-Gab Thesaurus."
page 5

Two reading texts and a reprint of "a book that can help you write" offer teachers something for themselves and their students.
pages 4 and 5

UCLA offers something special for the summer.
page 2

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A UNIQUE WRITING PROGRAM
Role Models Help Build a Bridge to Success

By PATRICIA McGRATH
Chabot College

FOR THE LAST SIXTEEN YEARS at the end of every quarter, I have closed that grade book, breathed a sigh of relief, and rejoiced at the thought of not having a stack of student papers on my desk. Who cared about vacation plans? Not reading papers was holiday enough! This quarter was different. I could hardly wait to reread student folders, including every scrap of paper and every revision, to verify what appeared to be the first miracle of my teaching career. Twenty-three remedial Hispanic students who ten weeks earlier were close to dropping out of school not only had completed a basic skills class and enrolled in English 1A but had become good writers. More important, they knew it. In fact, they were so confident and excited about writing that they wanted *another* English class where they could put together a book to be published.

What follows is a success story about a writing program for remedial students based on a few simple assumptions. We all know that writing improves if students have a real purpose for writing, an audience, and a teacher who understands the composing process, who helps students become writers first and proofreaders second. What makes this program unique, however, is that we included *role models* from the Hispanic community, successful professionals working in careers the students were interested in. The idea is this: provide successful role models for students who are failing, and as the students identify with the models, their self-image changes; this in turn brings about a change in attitude toward school work, and thus improved writing.

SELECTION OF STUDENTS AND MENTORS

Felix Galaviz, Assistant Dean of Student Personnel at Chabot College, and I designed the two-quarter PUENTE PROJECT (*puente* meaning bridge) for twenty-five Hispanic students. Most were about twenty years old; twenty-one were bilingual; no one was eligible for college level English classes; seventeen had part-time jobs, working an average of seventeen hours per week; the majority had poor grades and vague academic and career goals. Knowing that the students came to Chabot because they wanted to gain skills leading to good jobs, we hoped that if they talked to people with good jobs, they would have the incentive to stay in school.

Mr. Galaviz contacted twenty-five professionals—lawyers, psychologists, nurses, university administrators, a judge, and people working in business and various social agencies. All twenty-five eagerly volunteered to be mentors. Mr. Galaviz knew them personally and chose strong role models, people who would give encouragement and advice on how they went through the system because that was of more value to the students than specific career information.

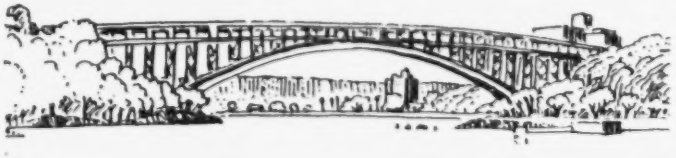
WRITING CLASS

Knowing that the students were terrified of English classes, that they associated them with failure, and that the traditional methods of instruction were not always effective for them, I designed the class so that *every* component, from specific assignments to the sequence of assignments, to the way papers were marked, was positive and geared toward success. They had had enough failure; it was time to break the pattern.

After only three weeks clear evidence emerged of a change in attitude toward writing. Without ever having discussed grammar or punctuation, I discovered that about 70 per cent of the errors had disappeared from their papers simply because students were doing a more careful job. Why? Because they were more relaxed and confident! We had begun with pre-writing activities that they enjoyed sharing with each other, and enjoyment was something they certainly had not experienced before in English classes. One early assignment was to recreate a pleasant experience from childhood, including sensory details. In their small groups students were asked to comment only on what they liked in the papers, never on anything negative. What they responded positively to were concrete examples, specific details, and interesting anecdotes. After the group sessions, they all rewrote their papers, and much to my delight, for the first time with remedial students I received *real* revisions, not cosmetic changes. Many went from writing ten lines to two pages because they were encouraged by their audience to include more. In fact, they actually were writing short essays, and though the paragraph indentations were not there, introductions, supporting paragraphs, and conclusions were, without instruction on my part. I suddenly realized how much easier it is for students to learn to write good paragraphs when they are not assigned a single paragraph.

The assignments were positive, directly and indirectly encouraging students to assess their values and think of success. In one early assignment, where students gave two reasons for admiring a particular person, the majority wrote about strong people, chiefly family members who through determination and hard work had achieved certain goals, goals ranging from putting food on the table to being the first in the family to go to college. As students shared values, they began to know each other and form a cohesive group. I realized ten weeks later that this paper had been extremely relevant to them. One student filled out an application form for a local university, writing a short essay on why she was motivated to succeed in college. In this essay she used parts of her paper on why she admired her sister who had such an influence on her. Another woman with tears of joy in her eyes waved before me an A paper from another course where (in a different context) she had again written about her grandmother.

After these first three weeks, students began saying, "I didn't realize how much I liked to write. I always hated English, and I never thought an English class could be fun." Every one of them told me, "I am really improving." Those were the magic words because once *they* felt they were improving, they had the motivation to begin learning the skills involved in the final proofreading stage of the composing process. With this group, however, working on the final stage was slightly different because so many spoke Spanish at home. Many, for instance, had not heard some of the verb tenses in English.



At this point I slowly introduced one grammatical or mechanical rule at a time, after which they examined their last paper to correct any misuse of that rule.

(Continued on Page 8)

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Letters

HERT HEARD

Dear Editor,

I have always enjoyed reading each issue of *inside english* and have found the articles dealing with teaching English composition especially interesting. Recently, I have been annoyed by certain letters to the editor which were unnecessarily critical of some of the same articles. The writers of these letters preferred to pick away at the style and editing of the articles under fire rather than discuss their content. I never asked any of my colleagues what their opinions were of your publication, but then I never heard any complaints either.

Then one afternoon, three of us were sitting in a small office discussing how to improve our beginning composition course for English as a Second Language (ESL) students. One of us mentioned the article "Writing to Learn Writing" by Judith Hert in your last issue [March 1982, p. 1] which described the use of free, in-class writing assignments based on a teacher-produced, carefully sequenced list of questions. All of us had read this article individually and had considered how this exercise would work in our classes. While one of us had decided against free writing as a class assignment, the other two were definitely intrigued and were strongly considering using some similar exercises during the next semester. In short, all three of us (and undoubtedly many more) had read this article with interest and thought to its application in our own classrooms.

So, although we may not write often to thank you for your hard work, please be aware that many instructors are reading and benefiting from *i.e.* in the quiet of their offices.

Sincerely,
ABBY RAPP
Santa Monica College

THANKS TO MS. LOGAN

Dear Editor:

When I read Georgia Logan's article, "Resistance Seemed the Name of the Game," in the March edition of *inside english*, I was reminded of a student in my past. Anne, a sophomore at the University of Maine, sat stone-faced in my Introduction to Fiction class while many students giggled and admitted that they had almost cheered the Misfit's shooting of the grandmother in Flannery O'Connor's "A Good Man is Hard to Find." Others howled as they talked about the comic side of that story's characters. Still Anne sat silent. When I asked for other reactions, her hand shot up, and she spoke quietly. "This is not a funny story. I have a friend whose family was shot and killed in the woods by a man like this Misfit—for no reason at all. No reason. What is funny about that?" In the silence that ensued, we were all confronted by the truth of what I had told them early in the course—we readers bring widely varied experiences to everything we read, and what we have done and seen and believed can profoundly affect our reading of any story.

Thanks to Ms. Logan for her reminder that we do need to be sensitive when those experiences evoke irrational—but understandable—responses in our students.

Sincerely,
MARGARET F. WHALEN
Canada College

Dear Editor:

I enjoyed Georgia Logan's short article in March's *inside english* describing what can make bright students misinterpret literature; but I must say that I was dismayed at the, to me, surprising conclusion of that article. Perhaps not unlike the intelligent students she describes, Ms. Logan, I believe, fails to follow out the natural logic of her piece to its expected conclusion, erring, I think, on the side of "compassionate concern for her students" rather than remembering that in a literature class we have obligations to the literature itself and to the culture and authors it stands for.

After showing how a couple of her students were confronting the literature in solipsistic terms—reacting not to what was in the literature but to traumas in their own lives which they foisted onto the literature—Ms. Logan concludes: ". . . what appears to be resistance to what we are trying to teach *may* have nothing whatsoever to do with the clarity of our explanations or the intelligence of our students . . . we can be sensitive to the idea that the reading may evoke emotions that the students cannot recognize or cope with. Pushing them to see what they can't yet handle may be counterproductive." Is Ms. Logan suggesting that we should abandon intelligence in favor of psychological understanding? To take an extreme case, I am sure it is obvious to us all that if we are faced with a psychotic student who refuses to follow ordinary logic, the word "counterproductive" may radically understate the case against our "pushing them to see what they can't handle." Most teachers, I expect, gain a kind of instinct for when it becomes a thankless and pointless effort to argue against intellectually recalcitrant points of view based, not on objective thought, but solipsistic compulsiveness: Ms. Logan's article nicely presents a couple of paradigms underlying such solipsism. But, it seems to me that the most helpful emphasis would be on helping these bright students to see that, in these special cases, they were for private reasons suspending their ordinary emphasis on intelligence: in short, though we should not "push" the students too hard, we should remember our obligations to the literature, and in honoring those, we are respecting our students' ultimate needs more than by, in any way, acceding to their confusions. Obviously Ms. Logan and I would basically agree; my point is just one of emphasis: I had expected her article to conclude with the insight that much recalcitrance has reasons worth discovering and worth helping the students to discover. Has not relativism—"my reading of this work must be just as valid as any other reading because it is mine"—been the bane of the past couple of decades of literary study?

DAVID RATNER
Cabrillo Community College

THOMPSON/MADDOX CONTINUED

Dear Editor:

Incidentally, and to be a real pain, I'd like to point out to Ms. Maddox that she was mistaken in her reply to Thompson that his "skillful revision . . . improved an equally parallel sentence." Cf. "Some Don't Like Us," Letters, *inside english*, March 1982, p. 2. She may have been talking about another one, but the one Thompson quotes is not parallel: " '. . . the class will not only accomplish improving writing skills but also improving learning skills in general' should read, '. . . the class will accomplish not only improving writing skills but also improving learning skills in general.' " Why not simply, "'. . . the class will improve not only writing skills but also learning skills"?

Sincerely,
JUDITH RAMOS
Moorpark College

(More Letters on page 4)

Notices

UCLA WRITING PROJECT OPEN PROGRAM

The University of California, Los Angeles, invites two- and four-year college writing teachers to a special section of the UCLA Writing Project to be held during the summer. The college component will involve participants in specific, hands-on presentations on such topics as creating successful writing assignments, cutting down the paper load, keeping up with current research, helping the ESL student, reorganizing classtime to galvanize student effort, revising and editing skills, and preparing transfer students.

Outstanding classroom teachers and visiting scholars, like Lee Odell and Donald Murray, are scheduled to meet with the participants this summer. In addition, the booklet *In the Trenches: Help for the Newly Recruited, Shellshocked, and Battlefatigued Teacher of Writing* will be distributed as a part of the workshop.

The philosophy of the UCLA Writing Project is that "As a writing teacher, you will teach better if you yourself write." The summer college component provides teachers the impetus to write and a supportive atmosphere in which to share their writing. The participants will examine their own writing processes and hear concrete ideas about getting their writing published.

Time: 28 June to 30 July 1982, Monday through Friday mornings, 9 to 12.

Credit: 8 quarter units, English 300 and 272

Registration fee: $275.00

Intention to register: $25.00

To enroll, fill out the application forms in the UCLA Summer Session 1982 catalog; information and description of the program appears on page 33 of the catalog. Call (213) 825-8355 to request the catalog. Applications must be turned in at 1125 Murphy Hall on the UCLA campus by 28 June 1982. For further information and scholarship information call Mary Jean Andres, (213) 825-2531.

A PLEA FOR MORE
Literature and Humanities in the Community College Curriculum

By JACK GILL
College of San Mateo

[The following is the report given by Jack Gill, Chair of ECCTYC's Literature/Humanities Committee, to ECCTYC's Board of Directors at its April 1982 meeting. The editor invites your response to this report. What is your department in general and you in particular doing about literature/humanities offerings at your college? What do you think OUGHT to be done? And, as Mr. Gill suggests, how about more literature articles for *i.e.*]

Aloha from your Literature/Humanities Committee (Nina Theiss, Santa Monica College; Steve Statham, Los Angeles Valley College; Gordon Taylor, Yuba College; and myself).

Conflicting tales of the state of literature courses (moribund in some colleges, blossoming in others) preclude generalities about the current health of the too-long sick patient, but one way or another the patient, we are pleased to report, still lives. It is even possible the patient may be gaining in strength. There are a few colleges, incredible as it may seem, reporting the growing healthy presence on campus of that thought-to-be-almost-extinct creature, the English Major.

We bring no request for Board approval or action, but we would like to make a few points and to stimulate your concern.

We live in a world (and whirl) of composition. We spend our days defining *remediation*, testing tests (both entrance and exit), conferencing about composition techniques and strategies, wondering what A S Triple C [Academic Senate of

California Community Colleges] is up to, worrying about CPEC [California Postsecondary Education Commission]. Your Literature/Humanities Committee does not denigrate these demanding and crucial matters, but we want to insist also on the function of literature in our English programs. Don't our students write as badly as they do at least in part because they can't read and don't read literature? We feel there needs to be more interraction between composition and literature so that the carry-over from the critical reading of literature will operate in the composition process. Maybe in our world of composition we have become too pragmatic; we have lost, as one member of our committee phrased it, the ethereal. We would have a stronger composition program if we had a stronger literature/humanities program.

Your committee then asks a continuing recognition from ECCTYC for the role of literature/humanities in our curricula. We urge more programs on literature at our ECCTYC conferences, more articles on literature teaching in *inside english*, more emphasis on literature in our articulation with high schools and colleges.

In short, we ask ECCTYC, most of whose members are trained in literature, not to lose its roots

or its *Othello*
or its *Huckleberry Finn*
or its *Collected Poems of Edward Estlin Cummings*.

AFTER THE REVOLUTION

They had finished shooting
those members of the government
who had needed it:

the President and Vice
most of congress and also the courts
and now had come to what was next

"What is a poem? asked Chuck
the leader of the guerrillas
"That's a good question" someone else
replied

JAMES KRUSOE
Santa Monica College

A Meditation on the Nature of Composition

By DOUG LANE
Santa Monica College

I

"You take me deeper into the experience of being myself." That was something I once said to a lover.

"Is that what you want?" she asked.

"It's all I've ever wanted."

Is it too much to compare teaching to

lovemaking? Does the willingness to do so bespeak a lunatic loss of perspective? Then I freely confess to lunacy.

II

Don't get me wrong. I don't love being a "teacher." I hate it passionately. I spent a lot of money I didn't have talking to a psychiatrist about just that problem: I wanted to be someone dynamic, powerful, romantic . . . and teaching seemed to me pedantic, impotent, bureaucratic, inane, and mundane. Every morning I awoke to give the best years of my life to squawking classrooms of hungry baby birds, their mouths open impossibly wide, always demanding, commanding, "Feed me! Feed me! Feed me!"

There are good moments in those classrooms. Even magical moments of illumination and revelation. I see students make intellectual and emotional breakthroughs in their writing. These are the common everyday miracles that are part of everyone's education. They are the reason young children are almost continually wide-eyed with wonder.

III

EXPECT MIRACLES. Have you ever seen that button? I sometimes wear it, yet how can a part-time English instructor in a California community college expect miracles to happen in his professional life?

Wouldn't this be more realistic?—EXPECT POVERTY—or this?—EXPECT SENTENCE FRAGMENTS, THOUSANDS OF THEM. IN FACT, EXPECT TO BE BURIED UNDER A BLIZZARD OF COMPOSITIONS LOADED WITH EVERY MALAPROPISM, CONTRADICTION OFFENSE TO RIGHT REASON, GRAMMATICAL ABORTION THAT A BADLY EDUCATED SOUTHERN CALIFORNIAN LATE ADOLESCENT LOBOTOMIZED EXCUSE FOR A MIND CAN CONCOCT.

IV

EXPECT TO BE BLED DRY. Hey. Who are we kidding? Teaching is soft work. The hours are good, we don't get killed in industrial accidents, and (I understand) the full-timers are even paid well.

BUT . . . it's horribly vicarious. We are paid to advance others toward THEIR goals. They go on to become astronauts and real estate magnates and what becomes of us? Why, we stay back, back in the classrooms.

"Staying back"—that's what the kids who FLUNKED did. So are we teachers flunking, failing, year after year because we never make our way out of school and into the "real" world, the world where our students go to test the skills we have helped them acquire? Because we "stay back," do we never grow up, never come into full adulthood?

V

TEACHING: LOVE IT OR LEAVE IT. You might ask, "Lane, if you're such a sorehead about our sacred profession, why did you get into it in the first place?" And further, "Why do you remain?"

As to the first question: I got into it through the backdoor. It was the dream of composition that lured me hither. I read Tolstoy, I read Yeats, I began to assemble my own word machines. I found myself with an MA in Creative Writing and no way to pay the rent on my Manhattan apartment. I learned of an opening at the Writing Center at City College of New York. I didn't want once again to work in a bughouse or drive a taxicab or do scutwork for a society columnist, so I found myself teaching ESL Comp to freshmen.

VI

"But, Lane, you were younger then. How do you excuse SEVEN YEARS of teaching?"

"Sir (and madam), no excuse. The long and short of it is that I haven't made myself into a rich, famous writer. Oh, I write. And I talk about writing to (and with) my students. And my dreams live on. And when my words catch fire, those dreams become a reality."

I can't help myself. I love language. I love the miracles that can happen when words pile atop words until whole cathedrals to the human spirit, paradises lost and paradises regained, are erected.

I love to fly, and words, properly woven, are the magic carpets that can take me to the clouds and mountaintops that are my spirit's true home.

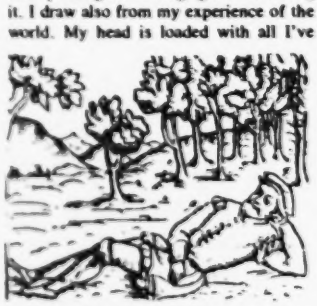
VII

When I teach correctly, I speak to that same love in my students. Nor do I simply give my words away and receive nothing in return.

Those congregations of minds and hearts out there, those intellectual wildernesses we call classes, are my forums. When I explain to my students how to verbalize more lucidly, more logically, more concretely, more sensually, I am explaining to myself. Re-educating myself. Bonehead English is not beneath me, for when I teach it, as Churchill said, "I am getting into my bones the essential structure of the English sentence."

VIII

When I teach "how" to write, I draw from three wells. I draw first from my faith in, and love for, language. I know the rewards of writing it and reading it and speaking it and singing it and hearing it. I draw also from my experience of the world. My head is loaded with all I've



heard and seen and felt, and I would dearly love to express this with words; I speak to my students' desires to do the same with their experiences. And I draw upon literature, which is a vast repository of frozen beauty waiting to be brought to light again so that it might melt and give life.

-REviews-

"REviews" features discussions of books and media programs that are suitable for use in writing or literature courses or that have special interest for teachers of English. These reviews should be from 100 to 500 words and should evaluate the book's or program's effective use in a classroom, in a learning resource center, by an individual student, or by the instructor. Include with the review all pertinent publication information, the number of pages or length of running time, and the cost.

ANOTHER READING TEXT?

By JANICE RANK
Porterville College

Another reading text! As the authors of *Steps to Reading Proficiency* say, "Sometimes it seems as if there are as many reading skills, terms, and methods as there are reading experts, clinics, and books." And, I might add, there are probably as many reading books as there are reading experts and clinics. We have all had, at one time or another, the urge to write that perfect text, the one that would meet the specific needs of our particular students. Since we seldom do

that, we create our own "text" by borrowing materials from a host of other sources: we take one chapter from a certain book because it explains a technique well, and one from another book because the readings are especially interesting. No one book includes all that we feel we need to teach, and each book also contains things we believe aren't that critical to teach—the "nice to know" as opposed to the "need to know." Our best teaching approach becomes the eclectic one. However, *Steps to Reading Proficiency* may be that one text we have been looking for to do the whole job for us.

As one of my favorite reading professors used to say, "There is no subject more written about in this world than the subject of reading, and still we know nothing about it." But, of what IS known, the authors of this text—both conscientious reading instructors, if we may so judge from their introductory material—have selected the best in materials and techniques and put them together in a superior reading text for our better-than-average adult reading students.

In this new text Anne Dye Phillips of Santa Monica College and Peter Elias Sotiriou of Los Angeles City College have chosen to focus on six primary reading skills: preview skimming, rapid reading, overview skimming, scanning, critical reading, and study reading. These are the skills most important to the college reader. By concentrating on just these six reading techniques, and by not trying to cover the myriad other skills reading professionals have discovered (such as perceptual skills or detailed vocabulary study), Phillips and Sotiriou provide the student with sufficient practice to master each new skill. Each skill is introduced, the how and why of it is explained, and adequate practice is given in the form of warmup exercises and timed selections.

An important feature of *Steps to Reading Proficiency* is the sequence and integration of reading skills. One weakness of many texts is the way in which reading skills are taught in isolation. Often a skill is introduced and practiced in a chapter with no application of that skill to later chapters or outside materials. This new text avoids this problem by using a technique of building skill upon skill. For example, preview skimming is taught in Part One and then applied to every selection throughout the rest of the book. The text also encourages the student to apply the technique to materials read outside of the classroom. This overlap of skills emphasizes to the student the value of the skill as it transfers to the real world as well as the progressive development of skill building techniques.

The content of the timed selections is interesting, varied, and in each case, appropriate to the skill being taught. My only complaint is that all of the readings have the same visual form. Personally, I would like to see material printed in a reading text so that it looks exactly as it did in the original newspaper, magazine, or textbook. This would add visual interest for the student and might enhance transferability of skills. On the whole, both the language and tone of the text are personal and comfortable, the print and visual format are easily readable, and the instructions are clear and simple.

Another positive feature of this text is the manner in which students analyze their own work. Comprehension questions are spaced throughout the lesson, just enough so that students can evaluate their work, but not so often that they lose sight of the content or skill in the anxiety (or boredom) of testing. An exciting idea which must be new for most students is that 100 per cent comprehension is not required. Students are actually allowed to make mistakes. Target scores ranging from 60 per cent to 80 per cent are indicated in each score box so the students

know what to aim for. At the end of the book are answers for all exercises plus a final evaluation where the students analyze their own work on each section and compare their scores with target scores. Suggestions are given for areas in which the student functions below the target scores. This type of analysis is relatively rare in reading texts but should encourage students to apply their skills after the formal course is completed.

These teaching techniques promote a freedom that should help the students to relax and to become more efficient readers. Maybe they will even learn to enjoy reading. I think I will try the book out on myself now and on my students soon. Maybe I won't need to write my own text after all.

Anne Dye Phillips and Peter Elias Sotiriou, *Steps to Reading Proficiency*, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1982, 442 pages, $11.50 [An instructor's manual will be available soon.]

FOR THE ADULT DEVELOPMENTAL READER

By HELEN HEIGHTSMAN GORDON
Bakersfield College

Janet Maker and Minnette Lenier have triumphed again with their new textbook for adult developmental reading students, entitled simply *College Reading*. This textbook will be valued by college reading instructors who appreciate a carefully sequenced and thoughtfully organized mode of presentation, clear explanations, ample reading selections, and optional drills. It has two tables of contents, the second organized by skills. The design makes it apparent that the authors are experienced practitioners.

The book is divided into four sections. The first section presents an overview of the reading fundamentals that are to be applied throughout—e.g. vocabulary development, main idea, inferences, critical reading, study skills. The last three sections (Levels A, B, and C) each contain ten nonfiction articles of increasing difficulty.

Typically, each reading selection is preceded by a vocabulary preview (with pronunciation key) and a survey practice drill. A comprehension check (including main idea and inferences) and a vocabulary-in-context check follow the reading. Other skills exercises are introduced periodically: using the dictionary, underlining key concepts, using SQ3R, etymology, multiple meanings, skimming and scanning, outlining, summarizing, graphs, logic, and critical reading.

The vocabulary level is mature but not formidable. The reading selections are practical and/or high interest topics; they can also be timed. A progress chart is provided for students to record scores. The answer key gives only the answers to the odd-numbered selections; other answers are reserved for the instructor's manual.

The instructor's manual also includes pretest and posttest readings of comparable difficulty, perception drills, supplemental exercises, and sectional vocabulary tests. These aids can easily be duplicated for class drill sets or overhead transparencies. Data on readability levels are also provided.

The exercises on critical reading include detecting supporting details, distinguishing fact from opinion, and discussion questions to evaluate ideas. However, they do not undertake such advanced interpretive skills as detecting bias, tone, figurative language, irony, or other such subtleties. Instructors whose students need these skills may wish to supplement the textbook.

In the back of the book, clear directions are given for calculating words per minute when scores go off the conversion chart, but this process could be greatly clarified by a sample set of calculations.

Another minor flaw might easily be corrected in a revised edition. To apply a concept such as outlining, the illustration should have subject matter different enough from the explanation of the concept so that students can easily distinguish between the two. An outline of a biology chapter would illustrate outlining better than an outline of a chapter on outlining. Similarly, the concept of main idea would be better illustrated with a passage about hobbies or history than with a passage about main ideas.

These minor drawbacks, however, do not detract to any degree from the usefulness of a book which shows such a profound understanding of the needs of college reading instructors and the interests of their students.

Janet Maker and Minnette Lenier, *College Reading*, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1981, 380 pages, $13.95. Instructor's manual and test materials available upon adoption.

Letters

(Continued from Page 2)

SOME NICE WORDS

Dear Editor:

We enjoy *i.e.* very much, and I encourage division members to pass their copy to other faculty. More than one article has been analyzed over a cup of coffee with someone outside the division.

Sincerely,
WILLIAM D. BAKER
Chair,
Division of Language and Communication
Taft College

Dear Editor:

inside english really gives us a lift and an excellent overview of what other faculties are doing throughout the state. I enjoy the scholarly articles balanced with the light, humorous pieces.

Sincerely yours,
NACY J. EDWARDS
Bakersfield College

WRITING ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE BRAIN

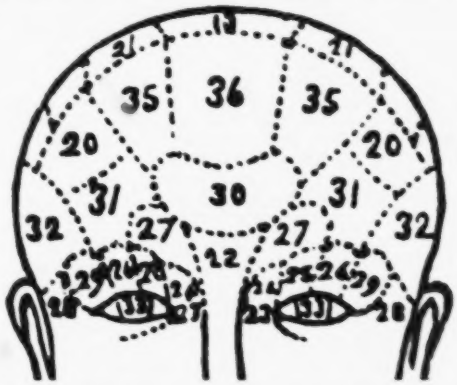
By BERNARD GOLDBERG
Santa Monica College

Recently reprinted with a foreword by John Gardner, *Becoming a Writer*, by Dorothea Brande, is a book that can help you to write. The program it proposes is like a train ride to a desired city—you enjoy the scenery as you gradually progress, in safety and comfort, toward your destination. The ground covered becomes a record of your journey.

Although this book relies on the individual's desire to write, its concepts can be "smuggled" into a typical composition or remedial writing class, but not because it teaches grammar, punctuation, or rhetoric. In fact, it explicitly avoids such areas, explaining that preoccupation with technique may initially inhibit writing and should therefore be a concern only after a body of writing has been generated. Instead, *Becoming* attacks the fundamental problems of starting and continuing to write. As students overcome these obstacles, they can explore themselves and their world and can develop a style. Students learn to write by writing rather than by listening to abstract lessons, and as they grow comfortable with converting experience to prose (and discovering experience through prose), they learn, with assistance from the instructor, whose advice is now immediately helpful, to use the language effectively.

Originally published in 1934, *Becoming* anticipates the left brain/right brain theory. Brande states that it is as if the brain were separated into two parts, one logical, or verbal, and the other creative, or visual, in that it sees relationships between phenomena. Some aestheticians consider the metaphor, the comparison between two different objects, the source of art, since it compels its audience to view the world in a new way. That the metaphor implies the ability to see previously unperceived connections, which is how Brande defines the creative side of the brain, and that she uses as a simile to explain her theory a concept of the brain that is now echoed by science, proves Brande's book remarkable, a work whose form complements its content, one that provides concrete examples of its abstract assertions.

The fundamental impediment to writing is inhibition, the fear that either what we have to say is insignificant or the way we express our ideas is less than elegant or effective. As we write, an internalized critic judges us, weighing our words and ideas against our ideals. All through this review, for example, I've been trembling in my syllables, knowing my words would be exposed to English instructors, people who actually know a colon from a cinquain. At each new paragraph I'd take a deep breath, motivated by the understanding that my career, such as it is—foolish statements at the Department Christmas Party and all—needs assistance.



Brande's proposal is twofold. Claiming that writing involves the purely physical problem (as well as the accompanying mental stress) of sitting day after day with pen to paper or fingers to keyboard, Brande urges the reader to establish a daily time of a specified length (which may be periodically increased) during which to write. This may sound obvious and simple, but the body and mind do react against such discipline. The person who follows this plan finds that production becomes part of the daily routine.

The second feature of Brande's solution aims to revive and strengthen the creative half of the brain, which in our society, with its stress upon objective correctness and common-sense logic, has been relegated to second-class status—tolerated for tea, but never for dinner. Explaining that our dream state, which has its own logic and its own connections and reference points, is an example of the right brain's dominance over the left brain, the author tells us to write immediately upon awakening, when the residue of sleep is still present. Before uttering a word, eating breakfast, or adding that anecdote to the morning's lesson plan, begin writing. Dreams, plans, fears, concerns—anything is a suitable subject. You can plan the lesson and add the anecdote while writing. This will liberate the creative self, and if you look back over your writing, you will notice a style has emerged, the result of your unique perceptions and reflections.

Only after presenting methods to enhance discipline and creativity does Brande discuss criticism. In chapters seven and eight, "The First Survey" and "The Critic at Work on Himself," she urges an honest evaluation of the writing you have produced.

Some instructors are finding that traditional methods of teaching writing are not as successful as they had hoped and are seeking new approaches. Peter Elbow, in *Writing Without Teachers* and *Writing with Power*, recommends keeping a free-writing diary or journal. *One to One: Resources for Conference-Centered Writing*, a textbook by Dawe and Dornan, includes journal writing as an integral part of the course. In addition to assigned essays, each student writes in a journal for twenty to thirty minutes a day, and topics are assigned each week to move the student through an exploration of experiences (such as "current life," "past life," and "social issues"). This activity benefits the student in two ways, for the discipline of daily writing allows him to feel comfortable with the act of putting ideas on paper, and the content of the journal provides him with ideas to be used in essays.

Brande's book is more than its title implies. Although it can help you to become a writer, if that is your goal, it can also, through the continuing dialogue you carry on with yourself, help you to recognize themes that run through your life and to acquire insight into your view of the world. Because you are writing for yourself, the layers of deception (self- and otherwise) are gradually removed and an individual emerges. Writing thus becomes a powerful learning tool, as the world and the writer's relationship to it, which were once buried by neglect, are dis-covered. Because of this, Brande's book might also be titled *Becoming a Person*.

Dorothea Brande, *Becoming a Writer*, New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1934, foreword by John Gardner, Los Angeles: J.P. Tarcher, Inc., 1981, (distributed by Houghton Mifflin Company), 186 pages, $4.95 paper.

A Course Classification Baffle-Gab Thesaurus

By JOHN LOVAS
De Anza College

Perhaps "baffle-gab" must result when bureaucrats try to formulate answers to problems they don't understand well. My efforts to sort out the categories and subcategories of the "Course Descriptors and Classification Code" disseminated by the state chancellor's office drove me to distraction. An example of the mindless use of language in this system can be found in I, (a), (1), D, 4 (never mind the incompetent use of outline form): "General and Cultural Courses." English grammar requires that this phrase be reconstructed "General Courses" and "Cultural Courses." People of ordinary intelligence and reading skill would struggle with trying to make sense out of a document in which "General Courses" is a subset of "Community Education Courses" which in turn is a subset of "Liberal Arts and Sciences Education" which in turn is a subset of "Instructional Services." "General Courses" apparently has no connection with "General Education," which, in any event, is never mentioned in relation to Baccalaureate or Associate Degree Courses.

No doubt we will all deal with this verbal monstrosity with some sort of rationalization: "Never mind what it says—figure out what it means and apply it that way." I have a better idea. Here's a "Community College Course Classification Baffle-Gab Thesaurus." For each course in the curriculum, simply take a word from Column A, one from Column B, and one from Column C. Every course will have its *own* baffle-gab descriptor. These can be compiled, collated, cross-referenced, computerized and communicated to all concerned.

Lovas' baffle-gab guide:

A	B	C
Adult	Occupational	Certificates
Developmental	Vocational	Degrees
Terminal	Technical	Courses
Transfer	Avocational	Classses
Community	Recreational	Activities
Continuing Education	Cultural	Seminars
General	Baccalaureate	Forums
Professional	Associate	Workshops
Personal	In-Service	Conferences
Compensatory	Relicensure	Lectures
	Education	Services
	Basic Skills	
	Instructional	

News From Our Regions

REGION II: SAN FRANCISCO BAY

Directors: John Callen, City College of San Francisco; Patricia McGrath, Chabot College.

Region II sadly announces the resignation of its long-time, much respected Director, Marlene Griffith of Laney College. She will be much missed by her constituents and by her fellow directors. However, Region II is proud to announce that the new Director is Pat McGrath of Chabot College. She will complete the unexpired portion of Marlene's current term. Pat brings an enviable enthusiasm and vitality to her directorship.

REGION III: SAN FRANCISCO SOUTHERN BAY/MONTEREY

Directors: John Lovas, De Anza College; Dick Lundquist, Cabrillo College.

Ms. Nell Sullivan, memoer of the English faculty at De Anza College, has received a one-year Fellowship for College Teachers from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Ms. Sullivan is currently in France, working on the research phase of her project, titled "The Creative Process in Six Early Women Writers: From Journals and Letters to Novels." The study will encompass both personal and published writing of Frances Burney D'Arblay and Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley from England; Madame de Stael and George Sand from France; Harriet Beecher Stowe and Louisa May Alcott from America. In her proposal, Ms. Sullivan explained that her study "focuses on those early women novelists who were aware of the pioneering nature of their endeavors and who approached their tasks with some degree of self-consciousness. Their work in both personal and public media will each illuminate the other and will yield a model of the creative process as it was first developed by women writers with a minimal dependence on the male tradition."

REGION V: SOUTH VALLEY

Directors: Bert Woodruff, Fresno City College; Janice Rank, Porterville College.

On 23 March 1982 Region V, the South Valley Region, held an informal meeting at College of the Sequoias to discuss several vital issues, in particular ESL, load, basic writing programs, and writing requirements for the AA/AS degrees. Participants from five of our seven member colleges met in small groups, first at College of the Sequoias and later at a colleague's home in Visalia. Besides vowing to keep in closer touch with one another during the next year, we also elected regional directors to take office this July: Bert Woodruff from Fresno City College and Gordon Smith from West Hills College.

Unfortunately, Gordon has subsequently had to resign his position because of a tripling of his administrative responsibilities. Janice has agreed to serve in his place, and President Cagnacci has appointed her. We are glad to have Janice continue and hope that Gordon will nonetheless have enough time to remain active in regional affairs.

REGION VIII: SOUTH LOS ANGELES

Directors: Kevin Burse, Long Beach City College; Stephen Montgomery, El Camino College.

Cypress College has been awarded a $50,000 Pilot Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to refine, implement, and test three courses that will integrate the humanities with science and vocational courses. The three courses are targeted to students in business, health science, and environmental studies and will be introduced in the 1982-1983 school year. The program, called CHOICES, emphasizes the historical and cultural background of contemporary issues, and leads students to form their own values system and apply it in evaluating current local situations. Members of the task force that developed the CHOICES program include Joe Boyle, History and Politics; Kay Beaton, Health Science; Don Hucher, Business; Dr. Evelyn Maddox, Health Science; Florence McAlary, Biology; Dr. Jim Phillips, Economics; and Dr. Margaret Boegeman, English, Project Director.

Richard Tracey of Cerritos College will participate in a round-table discussion, "Computers in the English Classroom," at the National Council of Teachers of English Annual Convention, November 1982, in Washington, D.C.

REGION X: SAN DIEGO

Directors: Elaine McLevie, Grossmont College; Shirley Sykes, San Diego Mesa College.

San Diego City College hosted the Region X Spring Meeting on 14 May 1982. Glenda Richter of Grossmont College reported on the continuing work to organize a Southern California Basic Skills Consortium. Shirley Sykes told of statewide issues raised at the April ECCTYC Board Meeting in San Luis Obispo, including ECCTYC's decision to hold the biennial Statewide Conference in San Diego in the fall of 1983.

ON THE EDGE OF RETIREMENT

This is the year I abandon you old friend:
Already your shelves are bare,
that golden horde packed and carried to the car.
Each week we grow toward strangers,
a certain disarray of long intimacy shared.

I know now how Thoreau felt that fall
before he left the pond; it was the hut-shell
that he'd miss, its mother arms that warmed,
its private cave-world that shaded
his silent thought through those long days.

But theirs were hardly thirty months while we
have shared more than half as many years.
All those faceless themes that punctuated terms,
those generations of eager or troubled faces,
all those timeless, splendid talks.

Your files jammed now with irrelevancy,
drawers and cabinets crammed and creased but gone
feeble with the years to end soon in a lobotomy
of trash cans and with old carefully marked texts
to follow toward a Viking funeral.

But old friend, be buoyant to see
this chrysalis being reborn out of your web
of loving care depart, time's butterfly gone
summer glad in fall, and know another
generation eagerly awaits your sheltering.

JACK LYNCH
Grossmont College

THE DEMEANING OF MEANING

I open the latest of the supernumerary handbooks
of writing skills to a diagram going
from one skull to another.
The text reads,
"Writer puts idea into words.
Idea transmitted to reader.
Reader gets the picture;
no loss of meaning."

This is not the introduction.
This is on page 128, in Chapter Nine.

I page back to a diagram entitled "The Second Paragraph,"
which is just a little less complicated
than the Family Tree of the English Monarchs.
It does, however, contain this gem of a suggestion
for why one might prefer the electronic media
to the printed word: "Why watch a printing press?"

So I turn to Chapter Ten, which is entitled,
"Transforming Writer-Based Prose into Reader-Based Prose."

What kind of prose is that?

It is, of course,
(besides being something derived from something called,
in a brilliant strike of inappropriateness,
"communication theory")

bad prose.

I keep asking people in "rhetoric,"
"Aren't we providing our students with examples
of precisely that type of writing which we should be
discouraging them from imitating?"
I'm taken to be a crotchety maker of wisecracks,
someone who's amusing to have around
but not to be taken seriously.
One of my alleged virtues, perhaps my only one,
is that I don't take myself seriously.
Maybe I should be ignored, and yet *Elements of Style*
has sold millions of copies
simply because Strunk and White
practiced what they preached.
It's a short book because they didn't have to give
a lot of examples,
because they were the examples.

GERALD LOCKLIN
California State University, Long Beach

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Teachers as Ostriches OR Who's Kidding Whom?

Earlier this semester, every community college was compelled to complete an assessment form designed by the California Postsecondary Education Commission, the purpose being to categorize courses, with special emphasis on those identified as remedial. Are we expected to believe that CPEC is engineering this study simply to practice its research techniques and for no ulterior motive? Given CPEC's close ties to and dependence upon the legislature, this would seem to stretch our collective imaginations. In a time of dwindling resources, with the legislature looking to spend less on education and with hints already being given that programs will be defunded and that differential funding will be implemented, we cannot help but wonder with whom CPEC will be aligned at the time decisions are made—with educators or with legislators?

And what are community colleges doing to counteract the legislature and its henchmen? If we look closely at some current suggestions from college educators, it would appear that we are forsaking our traditional, long-standing mission and are surrendering without a struggle. For example, the president of Santa Monica College is publicly advocating tuition; Fullerton College is planning to deny campus admission to applicants who read below the seventh grade level; some professional organizations are advocating a prerequisite minimum skills level for admission to compensatory programs; the joint higher education Academic Senates are entertaining a proposal that would deny credit for courses below the English 1A level, except for one three-unit Subject A equivalent course; and the University of California appears to be bowing to pressure to divest itself of the entire Subject A program, in many cases sending these students to already overcrowded community colleges, which cannot at present offer enough sections of courses to satisfy their current student demand.

What are classroom instructors doing about this state of affairs? Aside from private grumbling and complaining, it would appear very little. No truly concerted effort to present a unified front has been organized. Once again, faced with controversy, instructors seem to be removing themselves from the public forum, hoping that when matters are settled, they will somehow not be too adversely affected. We may prefer a dramatic stance in the classroom, but we assume the stance of the ostrich in public.

And are we doing anything on our own campuses? No. We seem to be avoiding real issues by resurrecting our perennially favorite, non-controversial topic: standards. Everyone—administrator, instructor, board member, student, taxpayer, legislator—supports standards. But how many of us are naive enough to believe we can maintain standards without sufficient operational funding. For every remediation program that is defunded, for every course that is differentially funded, and for every basic skills program that becomes non-credit, we will have a corresponding drop in standards in baccalaureate-level classes. The students in affected programs will not disappear from campus; they will simply appear in classes for which they are unprepared and maybe even technically ineligible.

The way matters now stand, the legislature will balance the budget at the expense of education and educators. When it happens, we can gather 'round the flagpole and wonder about such things as how poorly young people are prepared to be productive members of society, how the literacy problem never seems to lessen, how meaningless many college degrees have become, and so on—and so on.

JIM CAGNACCI
City College of San Francisco

CPEC, Money, and Education

SACRAMENTO SCENE

By GORDON TAYLOR
Yuba College

This year various groups, official and otherwise, have raised several educational issues that, two or three years ago, many of those same groups would have treated as untouchable. Times, it seems, have changed. The legislature keeps bringing up the possibility of having community colleges (CC's) charge some kind of fee, and the idea has not raised as much fuss as one would have thought it would. Many people do, however, claim that a fee by any other name is still tuition, and we can still expect the controversy when the legislature gets around to seriously considering a real bill on the matter. The California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) is one group peddling the proposal for the 1983-84 academic year. People from the CC's seem to think that the fees, though they go against the grain, will be necessary if the economy does not improve. The Governor has based his budget on reduced enrollments at both the University of California (UC) and at the California State University and Colleges (CSUC). One suggestion is to send the surplus students (for, perhaps, they should be so designated) off to the CC's. Most indications, however, point to an increase in the numbers of students, not the decrease that the Governor has built into his budget. The Governor and CPEC both, however, also recommend cutting some $80 million or so from the CC's budget for 1982-83. The State's institutions are rather in a quandry.

It is quite possible that, with schools raising their standards and raising or instituting fees, some potential students will turn to other things. Those people who are predicting the downfall of the public's higher educational sytem in California are probably a bit premature, though. The CC's will charge few and low fees, if any, in 1982-83, and, so far, they have no method by which they may deny admission to any qualified waif who shows up on their doorsteps. Besides, any person who does not think that education is worth $40 or $50 a year probably does not get very far even now. As for those who would starve if they had to pay that much, funding sources can no doubt be found. One wonders, when all the furor is over and all the accusations have settled, if things are or will be as bad as we make them out to be. But then, the principle of charging no fees nor tuition is like the Arc of the Covenant, to be guarded and protected from the unholy who would profane it. It is a curious thing, though, to contemplate the people who seem willing to sacrifice the principle rather than face some other issues that we continually avoid. CPEC sees three choices: limit the number of students who can get into the system or reduce the quality of education (already in trouble) or institute and raise fees. But these are not exclusive alternatives. Possibly, with fewer students, we could actually raise our standards and our quality, for example, and even still charge a fee. Our thinking is not always clear on these matters.

CPEC has other things in mind as well. It is the agency charged with coordinating the three segments [sic] of higher education in California and with recommending who gets what and who does what. This year, it seems as concerned with money as it should be with education.

In early 1981, it undertook to conduct a "study of Remediation in California Public Postsecondary Education." In May, it set up an intersegmental "Technical Advisory Committee" to help "in the development of the project, help in the design of the survey instrument, and review and comment on drafts of the report." The Commission's staff wanted three representatives from each of the "segments," two from some campuses and the third " a systemwide representative." The staff and the committee have met and made up their "survey instrument," and sent it off to the various campuses of the three segments. Due to what the staff calls "data problems," the study is moving along very slowly. What that seems to mean is that the staff is not getting the information it wants and that some people are very slow in returning the questionnaire (excuse me: the "survey instrument"). It wanted them back in November 1981 but later hoped to have them back by April 1982. Once it gets them all back, the staff will "do the necessary coding, analysis, and site visits" (this last, no doubt, to see if the people answered the questions correctly), and we might have a draft report presented to the Policy Development Committee (what else?) of CPEC in July.

In the Final Report, they (by now your guess is as good as mine as to who "they" are) plan to define remedial education; tell how much of it is going on, where it is going on; clarify "the relation between postsecondary and secondary preparation"; explain how higher admission standards will affect remediation; define "the relation of remediation to each segment's mission and function." Translated, it all seems to mean that what is taught at the secondary level is not appropriate for the postsecondary level, that the CC's, the CSUC's, and the UC have no business remediating: it costs too much money, and money is apparently the issue. Their theory is that we should not duplicate each other's labors, and if the students coming out of the high schools were properly educated, the postsecondary schools could get on with their proper business. And so, what else is new? CPEC is proposing legislation that will reflect the conclusions that its staff sets forth in the report. The CC's should receive less money for remedial courses and no money for some (they are including English as a Second Language (ESL) among the remedial courses, for example). The State would not pay for the same course twice: once in a high

(Continued on Page 8)

SACRAMENTO SCENE

(Continued from Page 7)

school and again in a CC or the universities. High school districts and CC districts would have to set up "delineation of functions agreements" that would say who gets what. They do not, as nearly as I can tell, draw a clear distinction between "adult education" and remedial courses. Senate Bill 1018, Sieroty, as amended, is the current bill on the matter.

ECCTYC has authorized Mary Ann Keller (San Joaquin Delta College) of our Basic Skills Committee to present our views to the legislature when CPEC presents its case. Since the issue is largely money, we argue that our remedial course should get the same amount as what are called baccalaureate level courses.

The Academic Senates of California Community Colleges, of the CSUC's, and of the UC have now a draft statement on "Competencies Expected of Entering Freshmen, Remedial and Baccalaureate-Level Course Work, and Admission Requirements." The three Senates will have considered it for final action during April and May 1982. It defines baccalaureate and remedial course work in English and mathematics; states what entering freshmen should be able to do (e.g., "the ability to generate ideas about which to write"; "formulate a single statement which [sic] clearly expresses the central idea of one's essay"; etc.); wants them to have four years of English and mathematics prior to entering; states that entering students should have had specific courses in mathematics. It also includes the "Statewide Standard for Entrance to Freshman Composition Courses" written by CPEC's Blue Ribbon Subcommittee that I reported on in March and June 1981. In some appendices, the document addresses such questions as "Academic Competencies in Speaking and Listening, Reasoning and Studying," presents some recommendations from the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics that define exit requirements from specific math courses, and includes "College and University English Placement Examinations" in which competent essays are defined and a competency examination is set up, each with examples. Some people, however, question the appropriateness of these examples.

We should all pay careful attention to this document: it may very well set up our program for us. While it is difficult to disagree with its premises, it comes to us from

an agency other than English, an issue that Jim Cagnacci discussed in his "President's Message" in March's issue of *i.e.* Standards, of course, are the thing now; one hesitates to say the current fad. They are a serious matter, as we have discovered, as we now confront the massive ignorance of most of our students. It is no doubt obvious by now that our intelligent children do not proceed on their own, do not get it on their own, as educational doctrine has preached for the past too many years: we need to lead and to teach them as well.

Everybody is, as the phrase goes, into Standards. Mayor Bradley wants to extend the school day; Gary Hart wants to test teachers (the legislature is still working that one out); Governor Brown wants to "invest in people" (with appropriate depreciation schedules and tax credits, I suppose); even the state Board of Education supports standards (will wonders never cease!); universities are against mickey mouse courses in high school (things like "student leadership," "community service," "dance," etc.). All certainly laudable ideas, but we have argued over these things for years; and only some of the people in the schools seem willing to get down to the hard, tedious, boring work of teaching and learning.

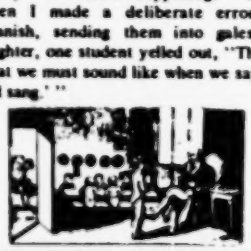
The main problem schools face is not money—not who gets what nor how much money each of us gets—but education. Education poses a problem that money will not resolve: what IS education? Few people seem to agree. The trend to an exclusively vocation-training definition is very disturbing. One aspect of the trouble, though, is that the trend started many years ago and is still gaining; it has not yet reached its peak. We discuss English, for example, not as a language but as a skill: we reduce it to nothing more than a tool to use in the world of work, in the service of business and technology where it is really no longer recognizable as a language. Once, we were told we had to choose between guns and butter; now, it seems, we are being told we have to choose between vocation and education. As before, this is a "choice" that is no choice at all.

LINGUISTIC GEMS: "Faculty" and "staff" are now in. "Teacher" is out. I'm a faculty; you're a faculty. How many faculty do you have on your faculty? How many staff on your staff?

WRITING

(Continued from Page 1)

Using their own sentences rather than those from a textbook, most learned the skills quickly, for textbook exercises often reflect a style and vocabulary unfamiliar to students, particularly bilingual students. Also, when I compared Spanish and English patterns, they learned the concepts immediately. For example, almost all of them were having trouble with present and past perfect verb tenses. One student said, "I always stuck an *ed* onto the verb, hoping that would do it. I finally see what's happening." Once when I made a deliberate error in Spanish, sending them into gales of laughter, one student yelled out, "That's what we must sound like when we say, 'I had sang.' "



THE MEETING WITH MENTORS

During the fourth week of the quarter, the real excitement began as students started contacting their mentors and coming to class with papers recording what had happened in their meetings. Because they knew that their classmates and I were eager to hear about these interviews, many wrote four to five page narrative accounts. Here, finally, was a real purpose for writing and a real audience waiting to hear their papers.

The results of those interviews with the mentors were dramatic. The students seemed to change overnight. They had been treated with respect by "important people" who introduced them to colleagues, invited them to meetings and parties, took them to lunch, and spent hours with them talking about their backgrounds and jobs. The voices from the narratives were filled with pride—pride in the community, pride in the mentor's success, and pride in their own achievement at having overcome their fears about interviewing professionals. As one student wrote, "I couldn't believe that I was going to eat burritos at the park with the judge in Oakland. When we arrived at the park, the judge crossed his legs and sat right down in the grass. This is when I came to my conclusion, 'The man is human.' "

Many of the students, most of whom come from large families where they are the first to attend college, commented on the mentor's having had a similar background. One woman wrote:

> As we talked I realized that Maria [a university student affirmative action coordinator] and I are similar in a lot of ways. For instance, Maria graduated from the same school I did. When she was my age, she seemed to have the same kind of goals and fears that I have. Maria had to work just as I do, and pay her own way through college. She comes from a family of eleven children. I know she had to really struggle to get where she is. I guess in a way I shouldn't feel bad when I get pressured or discouraged so much, cause in the end it will pay off.

This is the kind of identification that Mr. Galaviz and I had hoped would take place.

When one student announced that as a result of his contact with the mentor, he had been given a part-time job at a computer firm at $8.75 an hour, the class was visibly impressed. When he went on to say that the firm had offered to pay for his complete education, they were stunned! If anyone had doubts about the value of continuing the program, those doubts disappeared that day.

Another student, whose mentor is an administrator at a local university, ended her narrative with:

> Well, we're friends now and he told me if I ever needed anything or any help then just come and see him or call him. I really felt different when I left because he helped me a lot to clear my head about things I questioned him about. I really enjoyed the visit and talking to him and meeting all the friendly people. They made me feel good and made me feel like someone important. I felt really happy when I left, like a new person.

Those students with mentors at the university began to think seriously about transferring, and a number of them started asking me questions like, "What's a B.A.? How do I apply for loans? What English classes do I need to transfer? What general education courses should I sign up for next quarter?" I was especially pleased to see this interest coming from students who ten weeks ago had no thought of future education.

STUDENTS TAKE THE INITIATIVE

As the quarter progressed, a phenomenon occurred that I had not experienced before with remedial students: they began to take the initiative. They started asking questions about specific writing strategies, and most important, they suggested paper topics. One man asked that I call the Attorney General's office to obtain a copy of the "Report on Youth Gang Violence in California," saying that "the students in the class would be interested in it and would probably like to write about it." I, of course, called immediately, and my two copies of this 104-page report were passed from person to person, all of whom eagerly read it and returned it thumb-worn and ragged. They could hardly wait to write their responses. In fact, stimulated by that report, one woman, who "wanted to explore the feeling of being a cop" spent a Sunday evening on a "ride along with a policeman." Here was someone who not only had overcome her timidity in order to call the Police Department but also had written four pages on her experience to share with the group.

At the end of the quarter, some students actually said, "Is that *my* writing? It sounds *so good* when you read it."

CONCLUSION

After rereading their folders at the end of the quarter and reviewing the first half of the program, what struck me was the way the assignment "Once I was _____; now I am _____" had become a kind of symbol for PUENTE PROJECT. An amazing number of students used a pattern that began with something negative and ended with something positive. For example, "Once I was shy; now I'm confident." "Once I was intimidated by the men in my life; now I'm not."

What a change had taken place! Here were students who ten weeks ago had little confidence and a marginal interest in school and who were destined to become part of the 50 per cent of Hispanic students who drop out of Chabot. Now, twenty-three have completed the basic skills class and are registered for English 1A; they are taking general education courses, preparing to transfer to four year institutions; they feel comfortable at Chabot; and they love to write.

Obviously, a great deal of attention was given to twenty-three students, but those twenty-three have become a cohesive group, encouraging each other and serving as role models for other Hispanic students, many of whom want to become part of the next program. Calls continue to come in to Mr. Galaviz's office from adults in the community who want to be mentors in PUENTE PROJECT and from students saying, "My little brother is graduating from high school. Can he come into your program?" And so the bridge continues to be built.

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